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**Jocus: a Personification of Folly and Play
and an Attribute of Carnal Love in Renaissance Art**

by

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ABSTRACT

Jocus is a virtually forgotten and unrecognised figure in Renaissance iconography today; yet this personification has a substantial history in both art and literature. This study recovers the iconographic tradition of Jocus, identifying its classical literary origins, and tracing its survival, development and transformation in early-Christian, medieval, and Renaissance literature. Thereafter, it analyses representations of Jocus within art, focussing on medieval manuscript illustrations and a selection of Renaissance paintings.

The most prestigious literary source is a couplet in Horace's Ode to Augustus describing Jocus comprising a triad with Venus and Cupid. Thus, Jocus was associated with carnal love, which this study has found to be based on commonplace euphemistic language in which *iocus* implied coitus. Furthermore, it identifies a related iconographic theme, "*Le giuochi di putti*", which also conveyed covert sexual messages based on contemporary euphemistic language.

It discusses in detail a selection of paintings in which Jocus is most readily identifiable; significantly, all produced in mid-sixteenth-century Tuscany in the circle of the Florentine painter Giorgio Vasari. Each painting represents the Horatian triad with Jocus portrayed as a Cupid-like *putto* carrying attributes associated with childhood and play. Moreover, since moralising medieval sources associate Jocus with human folly, folly is also signified in these paintings. By further exploring the association between Jocus and folly, this study establishes a link between Italian and northern iconographic themes, and reveals a network of northern artists and humanists in whose work play, folly and love were interconnected. It reveals that the most enduring visual image of Jocus was a drawing by the northern humanist, Conrad Celtes, which was subsequently reproduced for over two centuries in emblem books and *iconologiae*.

Whilst the Horatian allusion consistently justifies the inclusion of Jocus in literature, art and illustration, this study nevertheless argues that punning references and sexual innuendo subvert the high-mindedness of the prestigious classical roots of the motif. Identifying the evidence of such subversion is an important outcome of this research.

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INTRODUCTION

Professor Erwin Panofsky has exhibited rare interest in a little-known and neglected figure in art: namely, Jocus, personification of Play. He makes passing reference to this figure as a companion and "alleged" brother of Cupid in both Renaissance and Renascences (1972, pp. 94-5) and in Studies in Iconology (1972, p. 98), citing the *locus classicus* as Horace's '*Carmina*', I, 2. Otto Kurz, in '*Gli amori di Carracci: Four Forgotten Paintings by Agostino Carracci*' in the Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes (1951) also recognises Jocus in one of a set of erotic paintings attributed to Agostino Carracci, and traces the imagery back to a Renaissance source. He, too, cites Horace. Apart from these two examples, Jocus has become an all-but-forgotten figure in the history of art, usually remaining unrecognised in paintings. Even when his presence has been acknowledged, it has not aroused extensive curiosity in modern scholars. It is the intention of this dissertation to recover the lost iconographic tradition of Jocus, tracing its origins, survival, development and transformation well into the seventeenth century.

An examination of the literary sources for Jocus serves not only to clarify who was responsible for "inventing" this Roman personification, but

also to establish whether or not he relates to any earlier literary or pictorial tradition. Thereafter, tracing his inclusion in post-classical literature reveals the route by which he was transmitted from classical into Early Christian literature, and through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period; until, in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, he was included in numerous emblem books, genealogies of the classical gods, and handbooks on iconography.

These literary sources, by means of which the personification of Jocus survived for almost two thousand years, supply descriptions that suggest a possible iconography. Two factors, in particular, depend on the establishment of a reliable iconography: firstly, the physical appearance of a figure, and the attributes with which he is endowed, are the means by which the viewer may recognise and identify Jocus in a work of art; and secondly, the attributes that have been selected for him are indicative of his significance, not only in a specific work of art, but also in the context of the society for which that artwork was created.

Classical and Early Christian literary sources indicate that Jocus, ostensibly a personification of Play, was consistently associated with carnal love. This association appears to derive mainly from euphemistic language in which, in the context of love, *iocus* implied coitus. Medieval sources, with their moralistic orientation, introduce the notion that he also represents human

folly in the face of carnal desire. These two aspects of Jocus are evident in varying degrees in most visual representations.

The earliest surviving images of Jocus are depicted in manuscript illustrations of the ninth century where he is visualised as a young man. He is identifiable mainly because these illustrations are labelled, for many of them relate only loosely to the text. Identifying Jocus in paintings is more difficult. Throughout his literary history he has been named as both a companion and a brother of Cupid; therefore one would expect that the two figures would have a similarly-related visual form. Accordingly, in the Renaissance period one would seek a cupid-like classical *putto*, but with attributes that associate him with play, jest or folly, as his name implies. An examination of playing *putti* in fifteenth and sixteenth century art reveals that, like Jocus in literature, they have frequently been used to convey covert sexual messages, the recognition of which depends on a knowledge of contemporaneous figurative language. Indeed, the success of Jocus in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries probably depended as much on punning references and sexual innuendo as on his prestigious classical roots.

The period of greatest verifiable interest in this personification was during the sixteenth century; but, although he appears in the text and illustrations of many books, only a few easel paintings have so far been identified in which he is a recognisable figure. The author and artist, Giorgio Vasari, is a valuable source instrumental in guiding recognition of Jocus in

paintings: he records and identifies this figure in both his own and Bronzino's paintings, in his *Vite*. Transformed into a classical *putto*, Jocus was included in paintings in the guise of companion to Cupid and Venus, as described by Horace. Significantly, the inclusion of this personification seems to occur only in the work of a small group of artists from a limited geographical area, and during a limited time span. Like Vasari, himself, the artists all worked in Florence at some time between the 1520s and 1560s.

In order to ascertain the significance of the re-emergence of Jocus in art, and to establish the meaning intended in each case, the relevant works of this small group of Tuscan artists are individually analysed. In addition, the circumstances under which each painting was produced are investigated in order to determine whether any connection existed between the *literati* who planned them, the artists who executed them or the patrons who paid for them. Because this was such a narrowly developed subject, it is an interesting microcosm of the wider artistic milieu, enabling connections to be established that would normally be too complex to trace. Thus, it is possible to reconstruct some of the means by which experiments with new secular iconography (albeit based on prestigious precedent) were explored, developed, adopted and disseminated.

It has already been stated that aspects of the literary history as well as the visual iconography of Jocus suggest that the figure personifies folly; so, too, does the term joker, which associates *jocus* with the jester and, thus, the court

fool. A survey of the visual history of the personification of Folly establishes that this was a particularly northern European subject, little used by Italian artists. At its peak in the Late Medieval period, the visual representation of Folly began by taking the form of a "natural fool", but later the court jester image predominated and prevailed into the sixteenth century. Between the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, however, the traditional jester of northern European art was gradually replaced by the image of a playing child or *putto*, not unlike Jocus. In tracing the reason for this change some revealing and new connections emerge, this time between a network of northern artists, including Dürer, as well as the humanists Erasmus of Rotterdam and Conrad Celtes.

The most illuminating outcome of this northern research, however, is the indication that the initial impetus for a renewed interest in the Horatian triad (Venus with Cupid and Jocus) may not have come from Italy, as one might expect, but from the northern humanist, Conrad Celtes, at the very start of the sixteenth century. Indeed, an illustration drawn and labelled by him was destined to become the most enduring image of Jocus, published repeatedly in modified forms in emblem books, genealogies of the gods and iconographic handbooks even until the eighteenth century. The Celtes representation of Jocus and that of the Tuscan painters are, however, very different from one another; one derives from a northern understanding of the figure as a manifestation of folly and jest; and the other from an acknowledgement of

INTRODUCTION

Jocus's kinship with Cupid, and an appreciation of his classical (and vernacular) association with carnal love.

PART ONE

LITERARY SOURCES OF THE PERSONIFICATION OF JOCUS

CHAPTER I:1

JOCUS PERSONIFIED IN CLASSICAL LITERATURE

One of the earliest Renaissance acknowledgments that Jocus is a figure of antique origin traceable in Roman literature is found in Vincenzo Cartari's *Le Imagini de i dei de gli antichi*. Except for the *editio princeps* of 1556, all later editions of the *Imagini* include *il Giuoco* (the Italian vernacular equivalent of Jocus) in connection with Cartari's description of Venus; and cite the immensely popular Roman poet, Horace:

*Horatio cantando di lei la fa allegra, e ridente che'l Gioco, che significa scherzo con motti allegri, e piacevoli, e fu da gli antichi pure anco fatto in forma humana, e va volando all'intorno insieme con Cupido.*¹

(Horace, singing of her, makes her cheerful and laughing, as Jocus is who signifies jest with much pleasant mirth, and furthermore made in human form by the ancients, and he flies around her together with Cupid.)

The *locus classicus* that has consequently been identified as the source of the personification of Jocus is Horace's *Carmina* (I, ii.), known as the Ode to Augustus:

" . . . Sive tu mavis, Erycina ridens
Quam Iocus circumvolat et Cupido"

(. . . or if you will, smiling Venus,
about whom fly Jocus and Cupid).²

In tracing the origins of Jocus, it is legitimate to inquire whether or not Horace can, indeed, be credited with the invention of the personification in the first century B.C. In fact, this cannot be the case since the much earlier comic poet, Plautus, born c. 254 B.C. names Jocus in two of his plays, together with several other personifications of abstract nouns, apparently created to give substance to the intangible feelings of his characters. In the *Mercator* Jocus is mentioned in association with pleasure: "*sex sodales repperi: Vitam Amicitiam Civitatem Laetitiam Ludum Iocum*" (I have found six companions, Life, Friendship, Community, Joy, Dalliance, Play)³; and in the *Bacchides* Jocus is referred to in the company of various amorous associates, including both Venus and Amor, when two of the characters, Pistoclerus and Lydus, stop outside the house where Pistoclerus's "beloved" lives:

<i>Lydus:</i>	<i>Quid huc? quis istic habet?</i>
<i>Pistoclerus:</i>	<i>Amor Voluptas Venus Venustas</i>
	<i>Gaudium Iocus Ludus Sermo</i>
	<i>Suavisaviato.</i> ⁴

(Lydus:	Why here? Who lives there?
Pistoclerus:	Love, Pleasure, Venus, Charm, Joy, Play, Dalliance, Conversation, Sweet Kisses.)

These unseen personifications convey a sense of vitality, a surrounding emotional community of imaginary figures.

By the end of the third century B.C., it had become a feature of Roman religion to create quasi-gods by personification.⁵ Cicero confirms the practise, in *De Natura Deorum*, where he discusses the consecration of temples endowed to abstract virtues such as Good Faith, Reason and Hope; as well as the deification of the "perverse and sophisticated vices" of Desire, Pleasure and Lust.⁶ The Greeks, too, had created quasi-gods by personification, and Plautus was to a great extent dependent on Greek precedent. His plays were not original but were based on those written in Athens in the period of the "New Comedy" (c. 325-250 B.C.), thus following a well-established tradition of Greek imitation amongst Roman writers. The lack of extant examples of the Greek New Comedy plays makes it impossible to determine whether Plautus's use of Jocus relates to any direct Greek precedent. Nevertheless, his words appear to be the first extant Latin references to a personification of Jocus, since he is the earliest Latin author whose work has survived in more than just scattered quotations.⁷

It was a favourite Plautine device to parody the Roman predilection for creating quasi-gods: he personified numerous common abstract nouns so that

his bawdy plays were appreciated by the popular masses at the festivals where they were performed. Plautus even had the following satirical epitaph, of his own devising, inscribed on his tomb; and it, too, included Jocus:

*POSTQUAM EST MORTEM APTUS PLAUTUS, COMOEDIA LUGET, SCAENA
EST DESERTA, DEIN RISUS, LUDUS IOCUSQUE ET NUMERI INNUMERI
SIMUL OMNES CONLACRIMARUNT.*

(Since Plautus met his death, Comedy mourns, the stage is deserted; then Laughter, Dalliance, Play and countless numbers all wept at once.)

The tomb of Plautus is no longer extant; and, indeed, this epitaph is known of only indirectly: it was recorded two centuries later by Marcus Varro (116-27 B.C.) in a now-lost book, *De poetis*, which was in turn quoted by Aulus Gellius (A.D. c. 130-180) in his *Noctes Atticae*.⁸ Horace, a contemporary of Varro, may also have known of the epitaph. He would certainly have been familiar with some of the many works of Varro, who was extremely famous; and considering their mutual interest in poetics, may well have read *De poetis* himself. He mentioned Varro in his own *Ars poetica*.⁹

By chance, the *Ars poetica* is of further interest, this time in regard to the "invention" of Jocus; because in it Horace considers the apparently contentious issue of inventing new terms in literature, or recasting familiar terms to make them appear new:

*In verbis etiam tenuis cautusque serendis / dixeris egregie, notum si
callida verbum / reddiderit iunctura novum. si forte necesse est / indicibus
monstrare recentibus abdita rerum, fingere cinctutis non exaudita
Cethegis / contiget dabiturque licentia sumpta pudenter: / et nova
fictaque nuper habebunt verba fidem, si / Graeco fonte cadent parce
detorta. quid autem / Caecilio Plautoque dabit Romanus ademptum /*

Vergilio Varioque? ego cur, adquirere pauca / si possum, invideor . . . et nova rerum / nomina protulerit?

(Moreover, with a nice taste and care in weaving words together, you will express yourself most happily if a skillful setting makes a familiar word new. If haply one must betoken abstruse things by novel terms, you will have a chance to fashion words never heard of by the kilted Cethegi and licence will be granted, if used with modesty: while words, though new and of recent make, will win acceptance if they spring from a Greek fount and are drawn therefrom but sparingly. Why indeed, shall Romans grant this licence to Caecilius and Plautus, and refuse it to Virgil and Varius? And why should I be grudged the right of adding, if I can, my little fund . . . ?)¹⁰

Horace's opinion in this matter sheds light on his attitude to creative writing: he considered that the license to create new words was still permissible in his own time, as it had been in the time of Plautus; and he, himself, should be allowed the right of introducing new names for things. However, he makes the provision that, in order to be acceptable, the source of inspiration for such new words should have a Greek origin.¹¹ Thus, in reintroducing the personification of the quasi-deity Jocus, Horace may have been, in effect, acknowledging the novel use by Plautus of the familiar word *iocus*; a use which Horace, himself, may have presumed was Greek in concept. Since, in addition, Plautus is known to have copied the Greek New Comedy plays, the notion of a possible Greek source for Jocus must now be examined.

Himeros: a Greek counterpart of Jocus

Plautus had conjured up many personifications in order to allude to matters of love; but Horace selected only Jocus to be the companion for the well-established partnership of Venus and Cupid. Moreover, in doing so, Horace gave Jocus virtual parity with Cupid. It is possible that he was looking to Greek precedent in the established Roman way; and as he, himself, advocated in the *Ars poetica*. There is no direct equivalent of Jocus in surviving Greek literature, but there is certainly a precedent for a similar companion to the young god of love, Eros.

Hesiod (eighth century B.C.), one of the very earliest Greek epic poets, wrote in his *Theogony* of two attendants present at the birth of the goddess Aphrodite from the sea. They are called Eros (Ἔρως) and Himeros (Ἥμερος) the personifications of Love and Amorous Desire, respectively:

And with her went Eros and comely Desire [Himeros] followed her when first she was born and came into the host of the gods. This honour she hath from the beginning . . . the whispering of maidens and smiles and deceits with sweet delight and love and graciousness.¹²

Once established, the figure of Himeros appeared as a companion to Aphrodite, almost as naturally as Eros, in both literature and art.¹³ In the fifth century B.C. they were regularly portrayed in the narrative scenes on Greek pottery, depicted as naked, winged, effeminate youths (Fig. 1 [b]).¹⁴ In the fourth century B.C., the sculptor Skopas carved statues of Eros and Himeros, and of a third popular companion, Pothos (Πόθος): and five centuries later

these sculptures were recorded by the traveller Pausanias in his Guide to Greece. Pausanias relates that, at that time, they stood amongst several statues in the shrine of Aphrodite at Megara:

After the sanctuary of Dionysus is a temple of Aphrodite, with a ivory image of Aphrodite surnamed Praxis (Action). This is the oldest object in the temple . . . By Skopas are Love (*Ἔρως*), Desire (*Ἥμερος*) and Yearning (*πόθος*), if, indeed, their functions are as different as their names.¹⁵

Unfortunately, none of these statues seem to have survived, and Pausanias gives no description of their appearance.

In literature, Himeros appears again in a collection of Greek poems known as the Anacreontea. One of these, the "Ode on a Disc," describes a carving of Aphrodite being born from the sea. Echoing the imagery used by Hesiod in the Theogony, the poet names her two attendants Eros and Himeros. The ode praises the work of the unnamed sculptor who has carved the image of the goddess naked in the water, describing her beauty at length; and then:

Over the silver on dancing dolphins ride guileful Love [Eros] and laughing Desire [Himeros] . . . with the Paphian [Aphrodite] where she swims laughing.¹⁶

Although the poet's imagery is derived from Hesiod, his poetic style imitates that of the Greek lyric poet Anacreon (sixth century B.C.). For centuries the entire collection of poems in the Anacreontea was thought to be by the poet Anacreon himself,¹⁷ yet modern scholarship has determined that some are as late as the Roman and even Byzantine eras.¹⁸ Such was

Anacreon's reputation as the poet of love, wine, and song that his verses continued to be imitated for three centuries after his death. The Ode on a Disc may have been written by Anacreon himself, but this cannot be verified.

Such Greek sources can justifiably be considered to have influenced Horace's choice of imagery: after studying under Orbilius in Rome, he later went to Greece and studied philosophy in Athens. When he published his first three books of odes in 23 B.C., he adapted a variety of Greek metres to suit the different character of the Latin tongue.¹⁹ He was clearly influenced by Greek lyric poetry, and even to some extent by Anacreon himself. One of his odes (*Carmina*, I, xxvii) has long been recognised as taking its subject from a poem by Anacreon of which only fragments are preserved,²⁰ and in another (*Carmina*, IV, ix, 9), Anacreon is mentioned by name: "*nec, si quid olim lusit Anacreon, / delevit aetas;*" (Time has not demolished the trifles with which Anacreon amused himself).²¹

Although Horace knew and admired the lyric poems of Anacreon, and sometimes used them as a source for his own imagery, it is a matter of conjecture whether he and the Romans in general were aware of which poems were imitations and which by Anacreon himself. It is possible that Horace knew the Ode on a Disc, with its imagery of Aphrodite, Eros and Himeros; but since the group also appears in Hesiod, this prestigious source alone could have

stimulated the idea of a triad with Venus and Cupid accompanied by a third figure personifying carnal desire.

The Anacreontic description uses the adjective "γελῶν" 'laughing' to describe both Himeros and Aphrodite: the epithet was often applied to Aphrodite in imitation of Homer who described her as "φιλογυμειδής" 'laughter-loving' in the eighth century B.C.²² The description of Himeros laughing implies a mood of playfulness and jest; and one could speculate that such a spirited mood suggested to Horace a parallel between the Greek Himeros and the Latin Jocus.

In later Roman poetry, Jocus was a participant in revelries: in the *Kalendae Decembres*, one of the poems of the *Silvae* by Publius Statius (A.D. c. 40-96), the "stern and serious gods" have been urged to depart, and Jocus and Sales 'Wit' are called upon to assist the celebrations of the December festival:

*Saturnus mihi compede ex soluta
et multo gravidus mero December
et ridens Jocus et Sales protervi
adsint, dum refero diem beatum
laeti Caesaris ebriamque aparchem.*

(But Saturn slip your fetters and come hither,
and December tipsey with much wine,
and laughing Mirth [Jocus] and wanton Wit
while I recount the glad festival
of our merry Caesar and the banquet's drunken revel.)²³

The Anacreontic flavour of Roman poetry describing such revels further supports the idea that Jocus had some kind of counterpart in the Greek lyrics. Again, the adjective *ridens* 'laughing' describes Jocus just as it was used to describe Himeros in Greek literature.

Despite such parallels between these two figures, it seems incongruous that Himeros is a personification of Amorous Desire whilst Jocus is a personification of Play, Sport or Jest. An examination of the colloquial and euphemistic use of the Latin noun *iocus*, however, reveals that Jocus, too, carried the connotation of Amorous Desire.

Jocus and Sexuality

In his Ode to Augustus, Horace identifies Venus as "*Erycina*": thus he informs the erudite reader that she is the goddess described by Ovid as representative of "non-procreative sexuality" whose cult originated on Mount Eryx in Sicily.²⁴ Her Roman temple, according to Ovid, lay outside the city limits, in order to protect the morals of young women. Cupid and Jocus are presumably intended to support Venus Erycina in her sexual role. Cupid is well-known as a god of love, whose name itself means desire, but the specific role of Jocus in this context is less apparent and warrants further investigation here.

Jocus has been variously translated into English; usually as Mirth, Play or Sport. However, the term *iocus* as used in the context of Roman love poems suggests that it had a figurative meaning intended to convey more than mere jest and play: when used in connection with love, it was recognised as indicating sexual activity.²⁵ This figurative use is exemplified, as one might expect, in Ovid's Art of Love where it is used no fewer than eleven times. For example: "*Celent furtivos balnea multa iocos*" (Numerous baths hide furtive play);²⁶ and "*nec taceant mediis improba verba iocis*" (nor in the midst of sport let naughty words be hushed).²⁷ In a different context, an anecdote in Pliny's Natural History illustrating the faithfulness of dogs tells of the dog of Nicomedes, king of Bithynia, which was reputed to have savaged the king's wife, Consignis, on account of their lascivious intercourse: "*memoratur et Nicomedis Bithyniae regis uxore a cane lacerata propter lasciviores cum marito iocum*"; not, as once translated, "while she played a rather loose joke on her husband."²⁸

Horace, too, whilst only once using Jocus as a personification employed the term *iocus* figuratively several times in the context of love and implied or overt sexuality.²⁹ It is not surprising, therefore, to find him utilising the personification of a well-understood euphemism for sex as a companion of the god and goddess of profane love. Jocus thereby reiterates the sexual, lustful nature of Venus Erycina and Cupid.

The survival of Jocus after the classical period declined is our next consideration. The advent and domination of Christianity resulted in the poems of Horace and the other Roman poets only being accessible to a small erudite elite. Nevertheless, one late-classical source for the personification Jocus was widely disseminated: in the fifth century, Martianus Capella from Carthage wrote The Marriage of Mercury and Philology, a book on the subject of the liberal arts that was destined to become "probably the most widely used school book of the Middle Ages."³⁰ Although it was an instructional discourse, it was liberally embellished with metaphor and allegory; and following ample precedent in classical literature, as has been shown, Martianus included Jocus as an attendant of Venus: ". . . *Jocus ministris Veneris suscitatur ipsique Cythereae, cui de proximo, susurratim decenter arrisit.*" (Mirth [Jocus] was aroused by the maidservants of Venus, and joked with Venus (who was close by) but in soft and restrained tones.")³¹ Today it is considered a "dull and difficult book" to read, yet it was one of the most popular in Europe for nearly a thousand years (a reminder of the disparity that can exist between the medieval and the modern mind).³² No doubt the allegory and metaphor made the serious lessons more appealing. Disingenuously, Martianus himself apologised for the "banter and cheap fiction" in a serious work, describing himself as a silly old man.³³

Thus, beyond the classical period, in post-Roman literature from early Christian through medieval times, Jocus continued to be recognised as

signifying lustful activity. The transition of this pagan personification into the moralising Christian repertoire of images, is the next important stage in tracing the survival of Jocus.

CHAPTER I:2

THE SURVIVAL OF JOCUS

IN EARLY CHRISTIAN AND MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

In the Early Christian era the gods of classical Rome, both major and minor, were put to the service of Christianity in the guise of moral personifications. One particularly popular concept was that of the *psychomachia*, a struggle of the Christian soul, represented as a battle between personifications of good and of evil. Within this context, the personification of Jocus reappears in literature as a companion of Cupid/*Amor*, in the entourage of Venus/*Luxuria*. A review of the development of the *psychomachia* tradition reveals the circumstances in which the figure of Jocus survived and became an occasional character in the moralising literature of the Middle Ages.

The medieval practice of representing moral concepts in personified form derives from the classical practice of personifying abstract nouns. The development of a Christian *psychomachia*, however, probably evolved in response to St Paul's letter to the Ephesians in which he urged:

Put on the whole armour of God so that you can take your stand against the wiles of the devil . . . Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having the breastplate of righteousness; . . . Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked. (Ephesians 6. 11-16)

It was commonly believed that every Christian had to experience this struggle of the soul. The early Christian writers looked to classical models for their imagery; in this case to the battles of classical literature, such as those of the Trojan War described in Homer's Iliad and Virgil's Aeneid. In their own poetry they adapted this image of conflict of armed opponents to create a moral allegory of the conflict of the Christian soul.³⁴

The most influential of these allegorical poems was the *Psychomachia* of Prudentius (A.D. 348-after 405); although he was by no means the earliest Christian writer to use the allegorical device of personifications of opposing forces.³⁵ The idea was first introduced into Christian literature in The Shepherd by Hermas (A.D. c.148) where a general group of virtues is described as beautiful, heroic maidens; whilst twelve named vices (such as Unbelief, Deceit and Lust) are, in contrast, women dressed in black.³⁶ The introduction of the battle format can probably be credited to Tertullian who described warrior maidens struggling against vices on a battlefield.³⁷ The linking of Christian ideals with pagan imagery is common in early Christian writing, and reflects the taste for allegory that is prevalent in both Christian and pagan literature of the period.

The figure of Jocus was transmitted from classical literature into the medieval repertoire of images in Prudentius's epic poem, the *Psychomachia*. An important episode of the poem describes how the vice *Luxuria* (which can be understood as a Christian allegory for Venus) has seduced the soldiers of

Christ. The virtue *Sobrietas* comes to their aid: wielding a crucifix, she kills *Luxuria*, whose train of associated lustful vices takes flight. Amongst the defeated and fleeing entourage are both Jocus and Amor:

*... Iocus et Petulantia primi
cymbala proiciunt; bellum nam talibus armis
ludebant resono meditantes vulnera sistro ...
Dat tergum fugitus Amor, lita tela veneno
et lapsum ex umeris arcum pharetramque candentum pallidus
ipse metu sua post vestigia linquit.*

[... Jest [Jocus] and Impudence [Petulantia] first cast away their cymbals; for it was with such weapons that they played at war, thinking to wound with the noise of a rattle ... Amor turns his back in flight. Pale himself with fear he leaves behind his poisoned darts, abandoning his bow where it has slipped from his shoulder, his quiver where it falls.]

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In a manner reminiscent of Plautus, Prudentius has created a group of personifications from words associated with lovemaking; but instead of the congenial company familiar in Plautine comedy, Prudentius makes wicked, immoral vices of them. They are subsequently condemned and defeated, along with their leader, *Luxuria*; their defeat signalled by the dropping of their various weapons.

The "weapons" Prudentius describes are the attributes by which the characters are usually recognised: for instance, Amor drops his familiar bow, poisoned arrows and quiver.³⁹ The attributes of Jocus must have been invented by Prudentius, as there appears to be no known precedent for them,

either literary or visual. The ones he chose are musical instruments of the percussion type, the cymbals and the sistrum; indicating that these are weapons which wound by their noise.⁴⁰ They are also the weapons of *Petulantia*, the companion of Jocus, establishing that there is a close similarity between these two personifications. Although *petulantia* is generally translated as 'pertness' or 'impudence', it can also mean 'wantonness' or 'lasciviousness', a meaning consistent with the figurative sexual meaning of *iocus*. Interpreted in this way, these two personifications, closely followed in the poem by Amor, more clearly convey the lustful nature of *Luxuria*.

About three hundred manuscripts of Prudentius's *Psychomachia* survive, dating from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries (in addition to printed books produced after the fifteenth century), attesting to its continuing popularity throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Of the surviving manuscripts, sixteen are illustrated; and twelve of these have illustrations of Jocus and Amor. They are always depicted either side-by-side or consecutively, thus visually reinforcing their association with one another.⁴¹

The *psychomachia* method was subsequently utilised in a twelfth century text, the *Anticlaudianus de Antirufino* by Alain de Lille, in which Jocus again briefly appears.⁴² In this allegory, Prudence travels to Heaven in a quest to find the perfectly good man. She is given a mirror which contains every grace

and which is endowed with a soul by God; but on her return to earth with the perfect mirror-soul, now encapsulated in a perfect body, the Vices attack.⁴³

Prominent amongst these is their leader, Folly/*Stultitia*, a traditional antagonist of Prudence, whose fellow-vices include Jocus, Ludus, Luxuria and Venus.⁴⁴

This is an entourage of profligacy resembling that of *Luxuria* in Prudentius's *Psychomachia*. In the *Anticlaudianus*, however, the foolish and irrational aspects of lust have been emphasised by placing the personifications of lovemaking in the domain of Folly.

Like the *Anticlaudianus*, the anonymous French poem the *Ovide Moralisé*, written early in the fourteenth century, reinforces the connection of Jocus with folly; but describing both his appearance and character more fully than hitherto. During the Late Medieval period, a growing interest in Roman literature necessitated an improved knowledge of classical mythology; thus, after c.1100, there was an increased demand for the works of Ovid, in particular his *Metamorphoses*.⁴⁵ The *Ovide Moralisé* is one of the most famous of many so-called "translations" of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* into the vernacular, incorporating long moralisations.⁴⁶ In a passage describing the goddess Venus, the author revives the Horatian device of bringing Venus, Cupid and Jocus together as a triad; but now the group is condemned for its immorality. Having explained that Jupiter had castrated his own father, Saturn, the text describes how Venus was born when the castrated genitals of Saturn were cast into the sea; thus, Venus was the daughter of Saturn and sister of

Jupiter. When Jupiter saw that she was beautiful, he made love to her and from their incestuous liaison two sons were born, namely, Jocus and Cupid:

*Les gentitaires li trencha,
Et dedens la mer les lança;
De l'escume de mer salee
Et d'eulz fu la grant Venus nee.
. . . Tant a puis Jupiter veüe
Sa fille bele et agreable,
Qu'il l'ama, . . .
Qu'il se vault couchier avuec li:
De cele acointance qu'il firent
Jocus et Cupido nasquirent.⁴⁷*

This is a distinct elevation in the status of Jocus: instead of a mere attendant of Venus, as has been implied in all of the earlier literary sources examined so far, he is represented in the *Ovide Moralisé* as her son and the twin brother of Cupid, fathered by the supreme god, Jupiter. A prose version of this work, rendered in a simplified form, was written a century-and-a-half later, in 1466-67, an occurrence that attests to a continuing interest in its content.⁴⁸ It reiterates the tale, but more concisely:

*. . . d'iceulx genitoires et de l'escume de la mer nasquit la grant Venus,
dont Jupiter fut amoureux, si de leur amour fut conceüe Venus, la mère
au dieu d'amour, laquelle crut et devint si belle et gente que icelluy
mesmes Jupiter s'en amoura et coucha o elle, si furent engendrez Jocus
et Cupido.⁴⁹*

In both versions Venus and her sons are held responsible for leading lovers to abandonment. Consequently, the text explains, Jocus and Cupid are painted in pictures both naked and without sight, because they foolishly steal judgement

and reason, honour and virtue; it then further reiterates that they are painted unclothed and blind, because love and jest are often blind:⁵⁰

*Jocus et Cupido sont point [peint]
Au pointures [peintures] nu, sans veüe
Quar fole amours et jex desnue
Les musars de robe et d'avoir,
D'entendement et de savoir,
D'onner et bones vertus:
Pour ce sont il paint [peint] desvestus,
Et pour ce sont il paint [peint] avugle
Qu'amours et jex mains folz avugle.*

In the prose version, Jocus and Cupid are described more clearly as being responsible for causing men and women to fall in love with one another; thus Venus's skill, the prick of Cupid's arrow, and Jocus's ability to outwit succeed in tempting them (men and women) into foolish love; such people play to lose body and soul, honour and well-being, sense, time, virtue and understanding:

. . . Jocus et Cupido, qui depuis ont eu les offices d'enamourer les hommes et femmes les ungs des autres . . . Ainsi Venus art et Cupido point et Jocus dejouer les tempte pour parvenir à leur entente de folle amour, qui moult de gens amuse à y perdre et corps et ames, honneurs et biens, sens et temps et vertuz et entendemens. Et pour ce sont ilz paintz nudz et aveugles..

The text of the *Ovide Moralisé*, in both verse and prose, provides a description of the actual role which Jocus and Cupid were understood to play in love. Crucially, there is a clear allusion to the kind of foolishness which they evoke, namely, that of depriving lovers of their ability to act rationally.

The evidence of both the *Anticlaudianus* and the *Ovide Moralisé* shows that there was a clear tendency in the Late Medieval period to associate sexual

temptation with folly. This is confirmed by the respected authority, St Thomas Aquinas, in his prestigious *Summa Theologica*, in which he considers whether folly is the daughter of lust: "*Utrum stultitia sit filia luxuriae.*"⁵¹ He concludes that, indeed, folly arises chiefly from lust, "the mind being plunged into earthly things."

Although the cultural survival and transmission of the personification of Jocus is established, the issue of his identification as a twin brother of Cupid, as described in the *Ovide Moralisé*, is not firmly established in classical literature. In the earliest source, Hesiod's *Theogony*, Eros and Himeros are named as Aphrodite's two attendants, not her offspring. A later tradition eventually recognised the Roman Cupid (counterpart of Eros) as the son of Venus (counterpart of Aphrodite).⁵² Several conflicting Roman mythologies, however, offer various interpretations of Cupid's parentage, even to the extent of suggesting two or three different Cupids: Cicero discusses these in *De Natura Deorum*⁵³ Ovid, on the other hand, in his *Fasti*, begins his chapter on April: "*Alma, fave, dixi, geminorum mater Amorum,*" indicating that Venus was, indeed, the mother of twin loves.⁵⁴ These differing, but equally respected, traditions were transmitted into early Renaissance Italy, not only by new editions of the classics, but also through the mythographies of fourteenth

century scholars. The most popular was Boccaccio's *Genealogia deorum*, in which he reiterated the classical myths citing the key classical sources.⁵⁵

Contemporary with Boccaccio, Dante Alighieri wrote *La Divina Commedia* (c.1300). There, in "Paradiso," he describes Venus: "*la bella Ciprigna il folle amore raggiasse*," later mentioning that she is the mother of Cupid.⁵⁶ Of the various commentaries written on Dante's work, one is of particular interest regarding the translation and interpretation of this passage because it not only suggests a sibling for Cupid, but also conveys the character of such a brother. Known as the *Ottimo commento* it was written between 1333 and 1337, and interprets the descriptive passage "*la bella Ciprigna il folle amore raggiasse*," to signify that Venus gave birth to "*il folle Amore*," thus suggesting that she had two sons, Amor and Cupid:

. . . bella Ciprigna, cioè Venus, così detta dall'isola di Cipri, dove avea suo singolare tempio raggiasse de sè il folle Amore; cioè che Amore fosse suo figliuolo . . . Onde nota che li poeti secondo la credenza paganica attribuiscono a Venere due figliuoli, Amore e Cupidine, per due suoi atti che da lussuria muovono.

(. . . the fair Cypriot, that is Venus, so-called after the island of Cyprus, where she had her special temple, threw off from herself the foolish Amor, that is that Amor was her son. Her other son was Cupid. Hence the poets according to pagan belief attributed two sons to Venus, Amor and Cupid, the result of two separate acts of lust.)⁵⁷

This singular interpretation might be considered of little significance if evidence did not suggest that, at least in Florence, the *Ottimo commento* was the most popular commentary of 'Il Paradiso' in the fourteenth and fifteenth

centuries, owing to its less scholastic character and wider range of classical allusion.⁵⁸

Thus, a contemporary source re-established the Ovidian notion of "twin loves." At the same time it introduced the idea of the twin brother of Cupid being "*folle*." This epithet suggests a variety of qualities which can be attributed to Amor: folly, madness and, figuratively, sensuality. The anonymous author of the *Ovide Moralisé*, also written early in the fourteenth century, gave Cupid an equally foolish and sensual brother, but named him Jocus. The imagery must have had a certain popular appeal which is reflected in both the moralising and the classicising writings of the period. Indeed, in the *Ovide moralisé en Prose* of the fifteenth century, the same phrase as that used by Dante, "*folle amour*," is used to describe the work of Venus, Cupid and Jocus.⁵⁹ Thus, at the advent of the Renaissance era, Jocus was identified as the irrational brother of the love god Cupid; and had acquired a character which signified both mad sexuality and folly.

An alternative genealogy for Jocus and Cupid, however, had been suggested two centuries earlier in a twelfth-century commentary on Martianus Capella's important and well-known late-classical *Marriage of Mercury and Philology*.⁶⁰ The commentary, attributed to Bernardus Silvestris, amplifies the small part played by Jocus in Martianus's text. In explicating the opening

passage: "*O Hymenae decens, Cypridis qui maxima cura es - hinc tibi nam flagrans ore Cupido micat*" (Fair Hymen, you are the main object of the Cyprian's care; this is why Desire, inflamed, glows on your face),⁶¹ the commentary introduces Jocus at a much earlier stage than the original text of Martianus:

Veneri et Bac[c]hi preter Himeneum quinque legimus filios: tres Gratias, Iocum et Cupidinem. Quos arbitror esse illos quinque gradus amoris, quod comprehendit versus iste:

*Visus et alloquium, contactus et oscula, factum
Ultima mares leguntur, eo quod plus vigoris habeant. De Gratiis autem mox dicetur. Causa ergo est voluptas Ioci, id est delectationes que est in oculis, et Cupidinis, id est coitus, et Himenei, id est nuptiarum. Magnum autem cure est Iocus voluptati nostre, maior coitus, maxime nuptie.*⁶²

Here we are told that Venus and Bacchus are the parents of Hymen, the three Graces, Jocus and Cupid, who represent the stages of love. Leaving the Graces for later explanation, the commentary associates Jocus with sensual pleasure and the "delight that is in the eyes", Cupid with sexual intercourse and Hymen with marriage; and whilst the sensual pleasure of Jocus is good, intercourse is more of a delight, and marriage is best. The essence of this explanation is reiterated in an abbreviated form later in the commentary:

*Gratie enim, ut predictum est, et Iocus et Cupido et Himeneus Bacchis et Veneris filii sunt, quia quinque gradus amoris et nuptie opulencie et carnalis voluptatis effectus sunt.*⁶³

The same genealogy reappears in the late-fourteenth-century romantic allegory, *Le livre des échecs amoureux*, but with a slightly different explanation of the role of Jocus:

*. . . que Venus la deesse de troix fils et troix filles du dieu Bachus. Les troix fils sont Cupido le premier qui est le die damours. Le second est Jocus qui est le dieu des Jeux et des follae du monde. Et le tiere est nomine Hymenus qui est le dieu des noptes. Les troix filles aussi sont les troix graces . . .*⁶⁴

In this case, Jocus is described as the god of the fun and follies of the world; but placed as he is between "love" and "marriage" suggests that these are the fun and follies associated with love-play. The *Échecs amoureux* was an anonymous allegory of love with an estimated date c.1370-80; and its popularity continued well into the sixteenth century.

Thus, during the transition from the medieval into the Renaissance period, several well-known literary texts were available to readers which provided descriptions of Jocus and confirmed his close kinship with the gods of love, sexuality and marriage, as well as his identification with folly.

CHAPTER I:3

THE REVIVAL OF JOCUS IN RENAISSANCE LITERATURE

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the spread of humanism, coupled with the invention of printing, led to a far more widespread dissemination of classical literature than had been possible earlier. Consequently, those classical authors previously discussed became more accessible and grew in popularity; and the personification of Jocus became known to a wider audience than the limited reading public of the Middle Ages. Due to the powerful influence of Italy's Roman past, Jocus was transmitted into both art and literature, and his role in classical Latin texts was occasionally discussed by contemporary commentators. Despite the minor role he played, Jocus eventually acquired a place in the image books, mythologies and *iconologiae* of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In order to understand fully the circumstances which facilitated this process, it is necessary to briefly summarise the manner in which classical imagery, in general, was made available to the reading population of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

The classical authors regained popularity in various centres of humanist learning in Italy during this period; and Florence, in particular, was a renowned centre of Greek as well as Latin scholarship.⁶⁵ In the fourteenth century, the

Florentine Petrarch, despite his peripetetic lifestyle, had built up a library that was unique for its number of classical Latin texts, as well as volumes of Plato and Homer in Greek. He had an eager admirer and disciple in Giovanni di Boccaccio (1313-75), who was accordingly inspired to learn Greek from the scholar Leontius Pilatus, whose presence in Florence resulted in the public teaching of that language.

Boccaccio's avid interest in classical mythology led to his writing the *Genealogia deorum*, which was essentially medieval in its moralising tone, and based largely on mediated sources.⁶⁶ For the following two hundred years, the *Genealogia* became one of the standard works on the characters and relationships of the classical gods; taking over in popularity from an earlier, thirteenth-century text by Albricus, the *Mythographus III*.⁶⁷ Not only was the *Genealogia* copied in a large number of manuscripts, but many editions were published in various languages after the invention of printing. There is no mention of Jocus, however, either in this popular tome or in the earlier *Mythographus III* by Albricus, a reminder that although Horace's *Epistles* and *Satires* were known in the Middle Ages, his lyric poetry was not yet a readily accessible classical source.

By the first half of the fifteenth century, it is thought, most forgotten classical texts had been rediscovered.⁶⁸ The first printing presses in Italy were set up in Subiaco in the south, and then in Rome. Thereafter, numerous printings of the Latin classics occurred, especially the works of the poets. The

texts were accompanied by extensive surrounding notes and commentaries, compiled by both ancient and Renaissance scholars.

Horace, in whose *Carmina* Jocus first figures as the companion of Venus and Cupid, quickly became the most popular of the classical poets in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Although Petrarch had already recognised and admired his work in the fourteenth century, it was not until the latter part of the fifteenth century that the many translations, commentaries and publications began: these have continued in both Latin and vernacular languages even to the present day. Indeed, no other Latin author has been so often translated.⁶⁹

The first printed edition of Horace's works appeared in 1470 in Italy, and was followed in 1474 by a printing of Acron's notes.⁷⁰ An edition that combined the notes of Acron (second century A.D.) with those of Porphyron (third century A.D.) was published in 1476; and the first printed commentary by a "modern" humanist was that by Christoforus Landinus, printed in 1482. The most authoritative edition for the next hundred years, however, was the collection of the Odes, Epodes and Secular Hymn published in 1492, in which Antonio Mancinelli integrated his own commentary with those of the other three (Acron, Pophyryon and Landino) eventually to become known as "the Great Four." Both Landino and Mancinelli included a reference to Jocus in their notes.⁷¹

In the thirty years from 1470 to 1500, forty-four editions of Horace's works had been published in Italy alone, a testimony to his enormous popularity. There can be no doubt, then, that Horace was well-read and well-understood in sixteenth century Italy; and, in regard to this study, his imagery: "*Sive tu mavis, Erycina ridens, / quam Iocus circumvolat et Cupido,*" would have been familiar to many, establishing the Venus-Cupid-Jocus triad in the Renaissance stock of literary imagery. This would have been especially so in Florence, where the first library to be open for public use was provided by Cosimo de' Medici in the Dominican priory of San Marco.

In setting up this public library, Cosimo had commissioned Tommaso Parentucelli (later Pope Nicholas V), an esteemed connoisseur and avid collector of books, to plan and draw up a list of "necessary books".⁷² Significantly, his list includes not only the complete works of Horace, but also all the comedies of Plautus, the Attic Nights of Aulus Gellius, and the works of Marcus Varrus, all of which have already been shown to mention Jocus.⁷³ Nevertheless, despite the increasing accessibility of classical sources and commentary, Renaissance writers do not seem to have utilised the personification of Jocus until the beginning of the sixteenth century, and then but rarely: only two examples have so far come to light.

The Italian poet Aurellius Augurellus wrote a book of poems "to arouse the passions" that was published in 1505.⁷⁴ One of these describes a revelry at

the house of Bacchus, at which Jocus, Comedy, Desire and Love are invited guests:

*Invitat olim Bacchus ad coenam suos
Comon, Iocum, Cupidinem,
Discumbit una liber, ac Amor . . .*⁷⁵

After excessive drinking, however, the party degenerates into a brawl. The context and tone suggests that Augurellus, like many of his Roman antecedents, was imitating the licentious poetry of Anacreon.⁷⁶ His poem also brings to mind the first-century *Kalendae Decembres* of Statius, cited previously, in which Jocus is also invited to assist with the celebrations.⁷⁷

As well as using the personification Jocus, Augurellus also used the term "iocus" figuratively in several of his other odes, placing it in the same kind of erotic context already encountered in classical Roman poetry.⁷⁸ From at least the twelfth century, books of amorous Latin poems were written which included "iocus", and even more frequently its synonym, "ludus", using the words to imply amorous and sexual activity. The practice continued in vernacular literature, too, using the Italian equivalent "giuoco".⁷⁹

One example, which would have been well-known to the populace generally, occurs in Ariosto's comedy, *Orlando Furioso*:

*Continuó per molti giorni e mesi
tra noi secreto l'amoroso gioco:
... si m'accesi,
che tutta dentro io mi sentia di foco*⁸⁰

(We continued for many days and months in our secret lovemaking: . . .
exciting me, for all inside I feel fire)

The lewd and bawdy plays of Ariosto were very popular, even in the papal court.⁸¹ It is an indication of the prevailing taste for lascivious subject matter that the Pope, himself, enjoyed such theatrical performances, not only at carnival time but throughout the year.⁸²

Ariosto, and other playwrights of sixteenth-century Italy, frequently imitated the plays of Plautus, especially his most scandalous pieces.⁸³ It is tempting to suppose that the figurative use of the term "*iocus*" (or "*giuoco*"), used as a synonym for sexual activity, was a direct influence from Plautus and other Roman authors; but it is more likely that in Italy the term had been a well-used colloquialism for sex from the Classical era right through the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance period.

At about the same time that Augurellus was composing his "poems to arouse the passions", the German humanist, Conrad Celtes (1459-1508), was reviving Jocus north of the Alps. Celtes was an enthusiast of classicism, who had travelled in Italy. Between 1487 and 1489 he spent short periods of time in Venice, Padua, Ferrara, Bologna, Florence (where he met Ficino personally) and Rome; returning home to Nuremberg, via Bohemia and Moravia, in 1491. He was an avid admirer of Horace; indeed, he is considered responsible for Horace's rise to fame in German humanism: his own book of *Odes*, published

posthumously, was organised exactly on the pattern of Horace.⁸⁴ An earlier group of his amorous poems, *Quattor Libri Amorum*, was first published in Nuremberg in 1502; and in one of these he imitated Horace's imagery ("Sive tu mavis Erycina ridens / Quam Iocus circumvolat et Cupido") with: "Venus aurea nostra . . . / Quam circum Iocus et demulcens corda Cupido" (Our golden Venus . . . around whom were Jocus and heart-caressing Cupid).⁸⁵

Celtes's imagination must have been stirred by this Horatian triad, since he again recalled the imagery two years later. He recorded finding (in a Moravian monastery) an inscribed Roman gemstone that depicted two figures: a winged, nude woman seated on the ground playing a harp; and a winged *putto* standing beside her, holding in his hand a puppet-like head. Having made a drawing of the gemstone image, Celtes added to it the names *VENUS* (over the woman), *CUPIDO* (over the *putto*) and *IOCUS* (over the puppet-head). Surprisingly, this German drawing was destined to be the means by which images of classical Jocus were most widely disseminated over the following centuries.

In 1534, three decades after Conrad Celtes had imitated Horace's triad, another German humanist, Petrus Apianus (with B. Amantius), compiled the *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis*; the first, and perhaps most famous, of many similar collections of allegedly-classical inscriptions that became standard reference books for anyone seeking classical source material. It was published in Ingolstadt, a town where Celtes, himself, had lived for several

years. Apianus included a woodcut in his book that reproduced Celtes's drawing of the gemstone, complete with the labelling of the figures as *VENUS*, *CUPIDO* and *IOCUS* (Fig. 2).⁸⁶

The woodcut was identified as an illustration of an inscription discovered by Celtes on a seal stone which decorated a gold cross in the monastery of "Ritisch" (probably Hradisch) near Olmütz in July 1504.⁸⁷ The labelling, although added by Celtes himself by way of identifying the figures, was accepted in the sixteenth century as genuinely antique, presumably because of the manner in which it was presented by Apianus. The reproduction of the drawing in the *Inscriptiones*, a widely disseminated book, gave new impetus to the survival of Jocus; and some decades later copies of the illustration began to appear in numerous emblem books and mythographies of the later-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In addition to images derived from Celtes's gemstone drawing, the two lines from Horace's ode, "*Sive tu mavis, Erycina ridens, / quam Iocus circumvolat et Cupido*," began to be quoted in both Latin and vernacular texts. For example, in 1567 Natalis Comes (Natale Conti) cited them in his latin work, *Mythologia*, as part of his description of Venus: "*ut innuit in his Hora[tius] 'Sive tu mavis . . . & Cupido'.*"⁸⁸ Although Comes did not actually name Jocus, and his text is unillustrated, he brought Horace's two crucial lines linking Jocus with Venus and Cupid, to the attention of mid-sixteenth-century readers. In addition, Comes cites Hesiod's description of the birth of

Aphrodite; and the proximity of these two classical sources supports the contention, outlined above, that Horace's Jocus was probably identified in the sixteenth century with Hesiod's Himeros, companion of Eros at the birth of Aphrodite.⁸⁹

At about the same time, the Horatian lines were combined with a copy of the woodcut of Celtes gemstone drawing from Apianus's *Inscriptiones*, in a vernacular rather than a latin text. This juxtaposition of word and image first occurred in Vincenzo Cartari's second and subsequent editions of *Imagini degli Dei de'Antichi* (although not in the first edition of 1556). The full-page illustration is accompanied by a passage in the text which focuses on the role of Jocus/*Giuoco*:

Horatio cantando di lei la fa allegra, e ridente, e dice che'l Gi[u]oco, che significa scherzo con motti allegri, e piacevoli, e fu da gli antichi pure anco fatto in forma humana, le va volando allo'intorno insieme con Cupido. Et Homero la chiama quasi sempre amatrice del riso, perche il riso è segno di allegrezza, che accompagna la lascivia. Onde fra le cose antiche raccolte da Pietro Appiano si trova, che fa a questo proposito un fanciullo nudo con l'ali, e coronato di mirto, che siede in terra, e suona una harpa, che tiene fra le gambe, & ha scritto su la testa, Venus, dinanzi del quale ne sta un' altro simile à lui dritto in pie, e lo guarda tenendo con ambe le mani distese in alto una di due treccie, in capo alle quali è un bel viso di donna ornato di un panno, che discende giu fin al mezo delle treccie: sopra questo capo è scritto Iocus, e sopra il fanciullo, Cupido.⁹⁰

Here, Cartari introduces *Giuoco* in connection with his explanation of Venus: he represents him as a figure described by Horace signifying pleasurable play, to which the ancients gave human form, and who flew with Cupid. Further, Cartari cites Homer to explain the laughter, "*riso*" (associated

with both Venus and Jocus) as a sign of the merriment that accompanies lust. Thereafter, Cartari gives a description of the drawing made by Conrad Celtes, but without mentioning Celtes at all: instead, he reiterates the antique origin of the image, citing Apianus. Thus Cartari reinforced the misconception that the labelling on the woodcut (*VENUS, CUPIDO* and *IOCUS*) was Roman.

The personification of Jocus must have stimulated some general interest during that period, since Cesare Ripa also included the figure in the first edition of his *Iconologia*, published in 1593. (At this time he was in the service of Cardinal Antonio Maria Salviati.) Under the heading *Giuoco dall' antico*, Ripa repeats the description of the Celtes-Apianus woodcut in much the same words as Cartari (although there is no accompanying illustration), directly quoting the two lines from Horace at the end:

GIVOCO dall' Antico

Un fanciullo ignudo, alato con ambedue le mani distese in alto, prendendo una di due treccie, che pendono da una testa di Donna, che sia posta in qualche modo alta, che il Fanciullo non ui possa arriuare affatto. Sia questa testa ornata d'un panno, che discenda infino al mezzo di dette treccie, & ui fara scritto, IOCVS. Si fa alato perche il giuoco consiste nella uelocità del moto, con scherzo: però disse Horatio:

Sive tu mavis Erycina ridens

Quam Iocus circumvolat, et Cupido.

Il resto si vede presso à quelli, che scrivono della deità de gli antichi.⁹¹

The second edition of the *Iconologia* (1603) omits the lines after "con scherzo", so there is no longer a reference to Horace, and subsequently the entry is removed completely.⁹² In a later, French, edition of Ripa, however, published in Paris in 1644, a new section was added which does not form part

of the original: it was called *Divers Amours* and includes an entry entitled *Charmes d'amours* illustrated by a roundel containing a copy of the Celtes-Apianus woodcut, including the labelling *VENUS, CUPIDO* and *IOCUS*.⁹³ The text informs that the illustration derives from an ancient medal, and proceeds to explain the attributes of the figures. Lines from a French poem, rather than from Horace's ode, are cited:

... *Que de toutes les Deités
Estant la plus charmante, ainsi la plus belle;
Le Ris, le Jeu, les Voluptés,
Et les petit Amours volent á l'entour d'elle.*

(... That [Venus] of all the deities / is the most charming, the most beautiful; / Laughter, Sport, Sensual Pleasures, / And little Loves fly around her.)

The association of "Jeu" (Jocus) with sensual pleasure was still prevalent, it seems, in the mid-seventeenth century.

Despite having an erratic presence in editions of Ripa's *Iconologia*, the continuing popularity of the Horatian motif is attested to by its inclusion in a number of other works. For example, the *Opinionum Libri Tres* by Joannes Marius Mattius, published in 1598, reproduces the full inscription from Apianus, including the acknowledgement of Celtes which Cartari and others had omitted.⁹⁴ Further, in 1607, the motif was used by D.Laurentius Ramirez de Prado in a commentary on Martial, *Hypomnemata ad lib. speculatorum M. Valerii Martialis*, as a means of commenting on the purpose of the word "lascivi" as it had been used by Martial in these lines (which are addressed to his own naughty little book):

*Sed tu ne toties domini patriare lituras,
Néue notet lusus tristis arundo tuos.
Aetherias lascive cupis volitare perauras:
I. fuge; sed poteras tutior esse domi.*

(But rather than put up with your master's continual erasures, rather than let his stern pen score your jests, you are eager, you frolicker, to flit through the airs of heaven. Very well, off with you! But you might have been safer at home.)⁹⁵

Ramirez notes:

*[LASCIVE] hîc propriè positum. Est enim "lascivum" quod Hispanè dicimus "trauieso iugueton" ut lib.14 epigr.75 [79]
Ludite lascivi, sed tantum ludite servi
Horat. lib. 1. Sat. 3. _____ vellunt tibi barbam,
Lascivi pueri:*

(*LASCIVE*: is put here appropriately. It is truly "wantonness" for as we say in Spanish "*trauieso iugueton*" as in Book 14, epigramme 75 : "Play wantonly, slaves, but only play". Horace, *Satires*, I,3: "_____ licentious boys pluck out your beard."

He further states:

Causa qu[o]d Venerem proxime praecedit semper Jocus, & cùm amantes ad Jocos deveniunt, propinqui maxime sunt Veneri; nec ulla certior ad eam via quàm per Jocum, quod prudentissimus Horatius bellè insinuavit nobis, lib.I carm. ode 2

*"Sive tu mavis Erycina ridens
Quam Iocus circum volat, & Cupido."*

... Vides "Cupidinem", id est, amoris ardorem, qui amantes stimulat, & "Iocum", qui viam aperit, & pudorem abstergit, "Venerem" ipsam, id est, actum venereum circumvolitare. quod nobis apertè indicat pictura relata ab auctore epigrammatum orbis, quam hic exprimendam curavimus.⁹⁶

(On account of Jocus being always close beside Venus, and at the same time lovers come to Jocus, and are closest to Venus; there is no surer way to her than through Jocus, as prudent Horace beautifully suggests to us in *Carmina* I, ii:

*"Or if you will laughing Venus
About whom fly Jocus and Cupid."*

Notice "Cupid", that is, ardent love, that stimulates lovers, and "Jocus",

who opens the way and banishes shame; they fly around "Venus" herself, that is, the act of love. And this is clearly revealed in the picture published by the author of "Epigrammatum orbis" [ie. Apianus], which we have chosen to show you here.)

The text is followed by an illustration of the Celtes-Apianus woodcut, with citations of Catullus and Ovid as classical sources which illustrate the meaning of "*lascive*". The entry in Ramirez ideally sums up the lascivious role that Jocus was recognised as playing in literary imagery since antiquity, as is demonstrated throughout this study; a role he was continuing to play in the seventeenth century.

SUMMARY OF PART ONE

Jocus is the personification of an abstract noun which has carried underlying connotations of sexuality and amorous desire since antiquity; but in Medieval times it also acquired implications of madness and folly. Evidence points to the personification being a literary invention of Plautus in the second century B.C.: in his plays, Jocus is mentioned, along with several other personifications to convey pleasure and well-being, and sometimes to set an amorous scene.

During the following century, Horace included Jocus in his Ode to Augustus. He raised the status of Jocus by giving him parity with Cupid, as acolytes and sole companions of Venus. In such company the amorous nature of the role of Jocus is reinforced. It has been shown that a similar triad of love gods has its literary roots far back at the very beginnings of Greek literature, in Hesiod's Theogony. There, the attendant of Aphrodite and companion of Eros, is the smiling figure called Himeros. As an attendant at the birth of Aphrodite, counterpart of Venus, he was of sufficient importance to be depicted with Eros, counterpart of Cupid, in the visual arts of pottery and sculpture, as well as in the poetry of ancient Greece. Jocus, then, can be understood as a Roman counterpart of the Greek Himeros.

The survival of Jocus through the Middle Ages has been demonstrated to have occurred principally through the literary medium of Christian poetry. Two poems in particular were responsible for this survival, the enormously influential early Christian *Psychomachia* of Prudentius, and the popular moralising Late Medieval *Ovide Moralisé*. Drawing on classical sources, both transform the benign Roman quasi-gods of love into vicious personifications of lust. Prudentius, like the pagan comic poet Plautus before him, gave both Jocus and Amor minor roles as mere attendants in the entourage of Venus/*Luxuria*. In the *Ovide Moralisé*, however, the anonymous author followed Horace's example by improving the status of Jocus, giving him equality with Cupid as a special companion of Venus, and presenting them as a closely-knit triad; but, he went even further: he raised Jocus to the level of son of Venus and twin brother of Cupid. It is this source that most strongly draws attention to the mad folly that Jocus and Cupid inspire in those who give in to carnal temptation.

Whilst the *Psychomachia* of Prudentius was one of the strongest influences on medieval religious literature, the *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* of Martianus Capella was equally influential on secular literature. In *De nuptiis*, Jocus is not only named as a son of Venus and brother of Cupid, but is also described as the son of Bacchus, and brother of both Hymen (god of Marriage) and the three Graces. This genealogy is reiterated in the late-medieval romance, *Le Livre des échecs amoureux*. The inclusion of Jocus in

such popular works would have ensured that he was a well-known personification to the reading public. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the dissemination of this imagery would have been restricted to the literate who had access to the relatively few manuscripts available, even of these popular texts.

After the invention of printing, however, the revival of interest in classical literature brought classical imagery to the notice of a wider range of readers. Even so, this does not necessarily indicate that there were many regular readers of the classics themselves. Contemporary Italian writers were reiterating as well as imitating both Greek and Latin authors, playwrights and poets in their own works, not only in Latin but also in vernacular Italian. This led to a general familiarity with images derived from the classics, such as Venus, Cupid and Jocus as representative of love; but this was not indicative of any widespread erudition, except in the case of an intellectual minority. In the case of the Horatian triad, much of its popularity could be attributed to the bawdy and lewd euphemistic connotations associated with the name of Jocus, especially when placed in conjunction with the more familiar representatives of carnal love, Venus and Cupid/Amor

The sources of Jocus cited here serve to establish the literary means by which this personification endured. They also indicate the character of Jocus and the role he was intended to play in the contexts into which he was written. These sources, however, serve a further purpose: they help to determine his

physical appearance, and hence the iconography associated with him, partly through analysis of the written descriptions, but also through examination of the manuscript illustrations and woodcuts which accompany the various texts. It is to the examination of visual rather than literary imagery that we now turn.

PART TWO

ESTABLISHING AN ICONOGRAPHY FOR JOCUS

CHAPTER II:1

THE ATTRIBUTES OF JOCUS IN CLASSICAL LITERATURE

The literary sources by which the image of Jocus survived from classical times through the Renaissance supply descriptions that suggest a possible iconography for Jocus. The attributes of his companion, Cupid/Amor, have been remarkably consistent in both art and literature at least since Roman times. Almost invariably he can be identified by his bow, quiver and arrows, and sometimes by his flaming torch:

*Volucrum esse Amorem fingit immitem deum
mortalis error, armat et telis manus
arcuque sacras, instruit saeva face
genitumque credit Venere*

('Tis our human ignorance fashions Love a winged god, implacable, and arms with shafts and bow his sacred hands, equips him with blazing torch, and counts him the son of Venus)¹

The case of Jocus, however, is different: literary sources rarely describe his physical appearance, and those that do show no consistency. Nevertheless, a

tentative iconography can be deduced from those sources examined so far, as well as from a number of manuscript illustrations that have survived from the medieval era.

We have seen that Jocus made his earliest appearance in classical literature. When named in the comic plays of Plautus in the third century B.C., his physical appearance was not described, but he was placed in the company of a string of other personifications that repeatedly form part of the train of Venus, goddess of love and sexuality. As already noted, in the *Bacchides* the scene is set outside a house of pleasure which a love-struck youth wishes to enter in order to find his beloved; the suggestion is of sexual gratification.² As well as Venus, the named companions of Jocus (Love, Sensual Pleasure, Attractiveness, Delight, Play, Chat, Sweet Kisses) are all associated with sex, flirtation and fun.

Two centuries later, Horace's description of Venus and her companions, "*Erycina ridens quam Iocus circumvolat et Cupido*," limits the entourage to just two acolytes, the ubiquitous Cupid together with Jocus. Again, neither is described in detail, but since they are referred to as flying around Venus, it implies that they are both winged. The later Roman poem, *Kalendae Decembres* by Statius, associates Jocus with wine and Wanton Wit, and describes him as smiling or laughing.³ In classical literary terms, then, Jocus is not endowed with specific identifying attributes. Rather, he himself is used

as an attribute of frivolity and licentiousness, generally in a context of carnal love.

No visual images of Jocus are identifiable in classical Roman art. However, in the earlier Greek tradition, Aphrodite's companions, Eros and Himeros, counterparts of the Roman demi-god Cupid and, arguably, Jocus, are frequently illustrated on Greek pottery. Here, Eros and Himeros (and a third figure, Pothos, who sometimes accompanies them) are depicted as winged youths or adolescent boys. They are shown attendant upon various goddesses, but especially Aphrodite. For identification, they are often named on the pottery (Fig. 1b). In the second century A.D., sculptures of the three *erotes* Eros, Himeros, and Pothos were recalled by Pausanias who had seen them standing in the temple of Aphrodite at Megara. Unfortunately, they no longer exist and Pausanias did not describe their physical appearance.⁴

In general, the physical form of *erotes* or love-gods underwent a change in Roman art which started in the fourth century B.C. They began to be depicted as chubby infants instead of adolescent boys, a change which started gradually with both types appearing concurrently at first.⁵ Eventually, in the third century B.C., the *putto* triumphed and Roman art abounds with representations of infants. Numerous winged *amoretti*, looking like playing toddlers, assist in scenes of love and seduction and at bacchanals. Although Jocus as a personification associated with play is not specifically recognisable in Roman art, play in general is frequently depicted: playing *putti* are carved in

relief on architectural freizes and sarcophagi, and portrayed in mosaics and frescoes (Figs. 3 and 4).

Venus accompanied by two Eros-like figures developed from the iconographic tradition of two acolytes serving a major deity. It was a common motif in the fourth century B.C., seen on vases, mirrors and gems of the period.⁶ In the third century B.C., Eros/Cupid began to be thought of as the child of Venus rather than merely an acolyte. In art, the second attendant also took on the appearance of a child. The idea of Venus as a mother became popular, in particular as the mother of the Roman nation, Venus Genetrix. As such she was often depicted with one *putto* on her shoulder and another at her side. Although there is no specific evidence to suggest that any such *putto* was recognised as Jocus, it is reasonable to assume that, had he been illustrated in art, he would have been depicted in the same manner as Eros/Cupid. Hence, the mind-picture evoked by the lines of Horace, "*Sive tu mavis Erycina ridens / Quam Iocus circumvolat et Cupido*," is of Venus with two *putti* flying around her.

CHAPTER II:2

ILLUSTRATIONS OF JOCUS IN THE MEDIEVAL ERA

The earliest known visual images of Jocus are those which illustrate medieval manuscripts of Prudentius's *Psychomachia*. Before examining the illustrations, however, it is appropriate, and, indeed, instructive, to consider the sources of the iconography that are suggested by the text of the *Psychomachia*. Prudentius, writing in the fourth century A.D., placed Jocus in the entourage of *Luxuria*, personification of Lust (and Christian counterpart of Venus). Further, he chose to associate Jocus and his companion *Petulantia*/Wantonness with noise-making instruments, specifically the sistrum and the cymbals:

*Iocus et Petulantia primi
Cymbala proiciunt; bellum nam talibus armis
Ludebant resono meditantes vulnera sistro.*⁷

Although cymbals are still well-known percussion instruments, the sistrum is less familiar. Thought to have originated among African tribes, this rattle-like device was associated particularly with the worship of the Egyptian goddess Isis (Fig. 5). The sistrum consists of an inverted, U-shaped frame transversed by loose-fitting, metal rods onto which were often threaded small, loose discs; the whole is mounted onto a straight handle at the bottom.⁸ A jingling or rattling sound is produced by shaking: indeed, the name itself derives from the Greek *seistron* meaning "that which is shaken." After Egypt became a Roman

province in 30 B.C. the sistrum became popular in Rome. It was used there, together with the cymbals and tambour, not only in the imported cult worship of Isis, but also in the cult worship of the Phrygian goddess, Cybele, and of the Greek god of wine and merriment, Dionysus.

Isis became an extremely popular deity throughout the Roman world even before Egypt became part of the Roman Empire.⁹ A temple was dedicated to her in Pompeii around 105 B.C., the frescoes of which still remain. In the first half of the first century B.C., the religious cult was in evidence in Rome itself. However, it was not universally popular, the Roman notion of *gravitas* being offended by the emotionality of the cult worship. Four times in the decade from 48 to 58 B.C. the Senate ordered the demolition of Egyptian shrines and statues. In 28 B.C. it was forbidden to erect altars to the Alexandrine divinities within the *pomoerium* and in 35 B.C. Augustus's minister, Agrippa, extended this prohibition to all areas within a mile of the city. Nevertheless, the cult spread throughout the rest of Italy, and even Julius Caesar's reformed calendar, drawn up by Egyptian savants, included festivals of Isis. After the death of Tiberius in A.D. 38, however, there was an end to the repression: Caligula built a temple of Isis that same year in the Campus Martius; and it was embellished by later emperors. Thereafter, the cult flourished and Isis readily assimilated a number of other foreign goddesses, attaining a peak of influence in the third century A.D. Ultimately, it gave way to Christianity.

At the beginning of the third century B.C., Cybele, known as the so-called "Great Mother" in countries further east, was generally thought by devotees to have come to Rome.¹⁰ The cult-worship of this goddess was at first welcomed as a reminder of Rome's ancient links with Troy, the "motherland;" and a black, hallowed stone, thought to be Cybele herself, was placed in the temple of Victory on the Palatine. An integral part of the cult of Cybele was her partner, Attis, and Rome quickly discovered that the joint cult worship was orgiastic, conducted by self-castrated priests; so a resolution of the Senate forbade any Roman citizen to participate. Twenty years later the same proscription was extended to the worship of Dionysus/Bacchus, a cult that had become very popular with the young and was similarly emotional and orgiastic. Despite the prohibitions, however, the popularity persisted. Consequently, in A.D. 391, all pagan worship was officially forbidden in Rome, and eventually Christianity prevailed.

Prudentius wrote his *Psychomachia* in the same period as the proscription of pagan cult worship, when Christianity was newly established. At that time, everyone in Rome would have been aware of the association of percussion instruments with the cult-worship of Isis, Cybele and Dionysus in their orgiastic rituals. Thus the cymbals and the sistrum would have seemed to Prudentius to be particularly appropriate for the entourage of the Christian vice *Luxuria*, the personification of the kind of licentiousness demonstrated in the cult festivals. The instruments were used to produce a music which had no

harmony in itself, but made a kind of cacophonous noise intended to stir the emotions by repetitive, rhythmic sounds. Thus the "weapons" of Jocus "wound with their noise" and are identifiable with the pagan and libidinous activities in Prudentius's own time.

Although Prudentius wrote his *Psychomachia* at the end of the fourth century, the earliest extant illustrated manuscript was not produced until the ninth century. The illustrations were therefore created at a time far removed from the period when paganism and Christianity coexisted in Rome. Of the sixteen illustrated manuscripts which survive, twelve contain images of Jocus: eight of these are French, three are Anglo-Saxon and one is South Netherlandish in origin. They will each be identified here using a code employed by Richard Stettiner in his book cataloguing all the known *Psychomachia* manuscripts: the code is based on abbreviations of their current location.¹¹ The manuscripts relevant to this study can be divided into three groups, based on the manner in which Jocus has been portrayed. The different groups indicate that the figure was perceived in a variety of ways by the artists concerned.¹²

Five of the manuscripts portray Jocus as essentially the same kind of figure and thus form the first group, which, for convenience, will be called here Group A. They are Le1 (now in Leyden), the earliest of the extant

manuscripts, produced in France in the ninth century (Fig. 6); P1 (now in Paris), a second French manuscript of the tenth century, considered to be probably the closest to the original illustrated version (Fig. 7); and all of the three Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, Lo1, Lo2 (both now in London) and C (now in Cambridge), produced in the eleventh century (Figs. 8, 9 and 10).

In each of the Group A illustrations, Jocus is depicted as a youth dressed in a short tunic and cloak, running away and looking back over his shoulder, as his "weapon" falls behind him. The "weapon" on the one hand resembles a child's toy: a cylindrical drum, containing bells or stones which, if attached to a longer stick, could be trundled along the ground causing a jingle or rattle. Such a toy has a long and continuing history: Roman relief carvings, for example, show children with an apparently similar plaything (Fig. 4a), the like of which is still available today. On the other hand, and perhaps more convincingly, it may represent a percussion instrument, constructed in a similar way to the toy, but with a shorter handle, that makes its sound by being shaken. The illustrators of this group of manuscripts chose to ignore the "cymbala" described in the text, and to depict Jocus with an object that creates random noise by rattling, as Prudentius's "sistrum" suggests.

The second group, to be called Group B, consists of four manuscripts: P2 (also now in Paris), Le2 (also now in Leyden), B1 (now in Brussels), and V (now in Valenciennes): each was produced in France between the late-ninth and the early-eleventh centuries (Figs 11, 12, 13 and 14). These appear to

derive from a different prototype from that of the first group: here Jocus is again portrayed as a youth in a short tunic, but he stands on uneven ground with both arms stretched out sideways with hands spread open in a gesture suggestive of surrender. Behind him fall a variety of musical instruments: a lute, a lyre and rattles. Unlike the portrayals in Group A manuscripts, he is not alone, but accompanied by two other young men, one holding a rattle and one a horn. One probably represents *Petulantia*, but the third person cannot be readily identified in terms of the text. The labelling of the illustrations names only Jocus: "*IOCUS CYMBALA PROICIENS FUGIT.*" It is odd that the term "cymbala" is used in the labelling, and yet the cymbals are not amongst the instruments illustrated.

The three remaining manuscripts are each individual and unique in their depiction of the Jocus figure. The earliest of these, Ly (now in Lyons), was produced in the eleventh century and is also French (Fig. 15). It has much in common with Group B images: three male figures are depicted with musical instruments scattered behind them; but, in this case, these objects are supplemented by horns, arrows, streamers and a sword. The left-hand figure holds a horn, whilst the other two carry nothing. The right-hand figure, a bearded, older-looking man, is drawn with hunched shoulders and a swollen stomach which he clasps with one hand; his companions seem to be gesturing to him while he looks back at them over his shoulder, almost fearfully, as if they are driving him away. It is difficult to decide which of these figures

represents Jocus, but it is probably the one nearest to the falling musical instruments. Identifying the figure who is being chased away is difficult: what can be the significance of the swollen stomach? The answers to these questions cannot be interpolated directly from the words of Prudentius. The illustrator has demonstrated a freedom from the constraints of the text itself and elaborated on the iconography, not only here in this illustration but throughout this manuscript.

Manuscript B3, produced in Brussels (where it is now located) in the eleventh century, portrays Jocus in a quite different way (Fig. 16): this is the only illustration in which he is shown naked; but since the entire manuscript contains many naked figures, this in itself is not significant for the interpretation of the iconography of Jocus. He is depicted alone and running; and behind him he leaves an array of bells and a striking-hammer which are drawn in the space to the left giving the effect of their being scattered in the air. Bells may seem to be yet another departure from Prudentius' description, but this is not the case. During the Late Medieval era the term *cymbala* referred to a wider range of percussion instruments than the two brass plate-like objects recognised as cymbals today. In particular, *cymbala* referred to a set of chime-bells played by striking with a hammer, illustrations of which are quite common in illuminated manuscripts. Thus, in the eleventh century, they would have been an appropriate attribute of Jocus, as suggested by the text.

French manuscript P4 (now in Paris) is the most recent of the sixteen extant manuscripts, and is dated 1298. It, too, contains a unique image of Jocus (Fig. 17): he is depicted in a long, simple shift, tied at the waist and buttoned at the neck, similar to those worn by many other figures illustrated in this manuscript. His pose, despite being relatively rigid and frontal, suggests that he is moving forward with his arms outstretched. As in the Group B illustrations, his gesture implies surrender. Dropping from his right hand is a pair of conventional cymbals (in present-day terms), joined to one another by a cord. Both of these final two portrayals of Jocus, in B3 and P4, omit any kind of rattling device, or *sistrum*, among his attributes.

How well do these varied manuscript illustrations conform with the image of Jocus envisaged and described by Prudentius? Many of the illustrators do not seem to have been compelled to follow the exact wording of the text in more than a general way, and in many of the images we look in vain for the *sistrum* and the cymbals named by Prudentius as the weapons of Jocus. A closer scrutiny of the manuscripts, in particular the glosses, reveals a reason for this: the terminology of the text may not always have been readily understood by medieval readers.

The *sistrum* had become sufficiently unknown in Western European society to have required marginal explanation in most of the extant manuscripts; and in several cases *cymbala*, too, is explained. Anglo-Saxon manuscript Lo1 states in a long marginal gloss that the *sistrum* was "a kind of

Egyptian trumpet" carried by Isis and thus associated with the flooding of the Nile: "*Sistrum est genus tubae aegyptiacae quam Ysis, manu sua portabat. Unde fertilitas aut sterilitas anni sequentis demonstrabatur, et utrum nilus exundaret an alveo suo constringeratur.*" Above the text a proper gloss reads: "*contra virtutes id est cornu cymbalo*" which is similar to that in Anglo-Saxon manuscript Lo2 : "*Contra virtutes cymbalo vel cornu.*" These explanations are somewhat confusing suggesting, on the one hand, that the horn is an alternative for the cymbals; and on the other, implying that *cymbala* and *cornu* are synonymous (although *cornu* could also suggest things made out of horn, thus describing the material of the cymbals).¹³ The Cambridge Anglo-Saxon manuscript, C, causes the reader further confusion with a tiny gloss that states: "*Sistro id est cornu vel cimbala,*" suggesting that the sistrum, the horn and the cymbals were all the same thing.

Some of the manuscript glosses explain the use of *cymbala* but not the physical appearance. French manuscript Ly states that they make a noise: "*cymbala quibus sonitu[m] faciebant*"; and it has exactly the same long marginal gloss as Lo1 to explain the sistrum. The most recent manuscript, P4, which is also French, explains that the cymbals are sounded at festivities: "*instrumenta illa quibus sonatum faciebant in conviviis ludendo faciebant valde sonati considerantes contra virtutes.*" Several of the glosses in other manuscripts reiterate that the sound of the instrument was used by Prudentius "against the virtues." The similarity of the wording in many of the glosses,

whether Anglo-Saxon or French in origin, suggests that they were copied from an original prototype. They also indicate a general lack of accurate knowledge about the two instruments named as the weapons of Jocus by Prudentius.

It has been demonstrated that the iconography of Jocus as it is conveyed in the text of the *Psychomachia* of Prudentius is clear and understandable within the semi-pagan, semi-Christian environment of early Christian Rome: at that time, both the cymbals and the sistrum were associated with the paganism and lasciviousness of certain of the cult religions. However, the iconography of the visual imagery which appears several centuries later in medieval manuscript illustrations is quite variable, and often ambiguous. There are, of course, few obvious parallels between the culture of fourth century Pagan-Christian Rome, for which the text was written, and the culture of medieval Western-European Christendom for which the illustrations were executed. Nevertheless, through the imaginative interpretation of Prudentius, noise-making attributes of one kind or another were eventually to become a recognisable part of the iconography of Jocus.

Jocus is further described in the fourteenth-century text of the *Ovide Moralisé*, written during the century that followed the most recent extant manuscript of Prudentius's *Psychomachia*, P4. The core of the *Ovide Moralisé* derives directly from the classical text of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, so classical allusions in the moralisations are numerous. However, despite being a classical literary figure, Jocus is not included in Ovid's original text: neither

does he appear in Berchorius or the many other medieval moralisations of the Metamorphoses. His inclusion in the context of the Ovide Moralisé, therefore, must have been an innovation of the anonymous author.¹⁴

This new description of Jocus portrays him as a son of Venus and twin brother of Cupid. Both are described as being naked and blind, and are strongly associated with folly.¹⁵ Although this juxtaposition of Venus with both Cupid and Jocus evokes Horace's lines "*sive tu mavis Erycina / quam Iocus circumvolat et Cupido*", the condemnatory description of their role is particularly medieval. In addition, whilst Horace writes of Cupid and Jocus flying around Venus, thereby suggesting that they have wings, no such attributes are implicit in the Ovide Moralisé. Unfortunately, surviving illustrated manuscripts of this poem do not include a visual image of this episode of the text. Illustrations of another scene, however, include the figure of Cupid (although not Jocus) in the company of Venus and the Graces.¹⁶ In these, Cupid is depicted as a fully-clothed, blindfolded, princely youth with wings.¹⁷ The tendency of Late Medieval artists to deviate from the written word in their illustrations is once more demonstrated.

Despite the classical source of the text of the Ovide Moralisé, as well as the Horatian allusion to the Venus-Cupid-Jocus triad, the manuscript illustrations all appear to be essentially medieval in conception. The text states that in paintings Jocus and Cupid were depicted both naked and blind, although not one painted example from the period has been found which could confirm

this assertion. Nevertheless, the description implies that such paintings did exist. In describing both Jocus and Cupid as the offspring of Venus, the text tends to imply that, in this context, they were visualised as two children. The earliest postclassical images of Cupid portrayed as a winged infant began to appear as early as the fourteenth century; and if Jocus were being depicted in art he could, understandably, be expected to have been shown in the same way. However, the next images in which Jocus is clearly identified show his physical appearance depicted in a quite different, and most unexpected, manner. These images occur in late sixteenth-century book illustrations.

CHAPTER II:3

JOCUS IN RENAISSANCE ILLUSTRATIONS

Despite various classical and medieval portrayals, both literary and visual, the image of Jocus that was destined to be the most frequently reproduced was that based on Conrad Celtes's 1504 drawing of an allegedly Roman gemstone, which was eventually copied as a woodcut in Petrus Apianus's *Inscriptiones* (1535) (Fig. 2).¹⁸ By labelling the figures in his drawing with the names *VENUS*, *CUPIDO* and *IOCUS*, Celtes apparently aimed to suggest a link between this visual image and Horace's literary one: "*Erycina ridens, quam Iocus circum volat et Cupido*", which he himself had imitated two years earlier.¹⁹ When it was published, his drawing offered the reading public a very different representation of Jocus from any of the precursors, either literary or visual.

The figure that Celtes had identified as *IOCUS* is merely a head without a body, like a puppet, held in the hand of a winged *putto*. It is strangely Germanic-looking, more female than male in appearance, having a headscarf and long, plaited hair. The *putto*, identified by Celtes as *CUPIDO*, holds the Jocus-head by one rigid pigtail. *IOCUS* is an incongruous element in the drawing: the other two figures are nude and classicising but the puppet-like head is quite unclassical.

The identification of the figures appears to have been a most peculiar stretch of the imagination by Celtes: in classical Roman imagery, Venus is not winged, does not wear a coronet of laurel nor play the harp;²⁰ the winged *putto* on the gemstone carries none of the usual attributes of Cupid such as his bow and quiver of arrows; and neither classical nor medieval sources which describe Jocus seem to relate to this Germanic, female, puppet-like head. Whatever the origin and the identity of the figures might have been in fact, this imagery and its labelling were apparently accepted in the sixteenth century as an authentic copy of an inscribed Roman gemstone, to be further copied, published and widely circulated in both the later sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries throughout Europe. Thus it presented to a wide reading public new elements in the iconography of Jocus.

When Vincenzo Cartari first wrote his *Imagini degli dei di antichi* and had it published in Venice in 1556, there was no mention of Jocus. The second and many subsequent editions, however, all included both an illustration and a textual description deriving from the Celtes-Apianus woodcut, following a reference to the lines of Horace's ode.²¹ They form part of Cartari's exposition on the goddess Venus and her attributes. The illustrations vary in detail from edition to edition of the *Imagini*, but essentially they fall into two groups. Those of the first group follow the format of the Venetian publication of 1571; and those of the second follow the Paduan publication of 1615.

Group I illustrations, which are full-page in size, depict the same three figures as the Celtes gemstone image: winged "Venus" with a harp, the winged *putto*, "Cupid", and the puppet-like "Jocus", but the inscribed names are omitted (Fig. 18). In addition, a woman seated on a goat is placed behind Cupid. Her skirt is divided at the side so that one of her legs is exposed up to the thigh; and her foot rests on a tortoise. The portrayal of this woman derives from another part of Cartari's description of Venus: "*Ella stava a sedere sopra un Capro, e con l'un piè sopra una testuggine*". By juxtaposing the two descriptions of Venus and her attributes into one illustration suggests that they were understood to convey various aspects of a similar message.

The goat was a symbol of lechery in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, reinforced by Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica*, a popular though apocryphal publication, which describes it as symbolic of male fecundity.²² In keeping with this description, the he-goat is depicted in two sixteenth-century engravings after antique gems by Enea Vico. In one it is accompanied by the figure of Pan and ridden by a *putto* named as the infant Bacchus (Fig. 19): the group is identified by the inscription, *LUXURIA*. In the other print, possibly after an antique gem, the goat is described as an emblem (presumably a hieroglyph) of the Egyptian Priapus "burning with lust and exciting frenzy" (Fig. 20).²³ In the Cartari illustration, the woman seated on this symbol of lust is portrayed exposing her leg in what was undoubtedly a well-understood, sexually-provocative pose.

The tortoise is given a lengthy explanation in the text that, amongst other things, describes the danger of intercourse to the female: she must lie on her back, and afterwards, when abandoned by the male, she is a vulnerable prey to other creatures: hence, she avoids intercourse until the touch of a certain herb excites her lust. Similarly, Cartari states, since women have to consider the dangers of childbirth, they also avoid lustful pleasures, unless there is the "obligation" of marriage and the procreation of new offspring.²⁴ The placing of the tortoise beneath the foot of Venus in Cartari's illustration could imply that she defeats this symbol that represents sex-only-for-procreation; the elements of the visual imagery have been selected to emphasise the sexual nature of Venus. thus the role of Jocus as an attribute of carnal Venus is again demonstrated.

Some later editions of the *Imagini* give an explanation of the illustration in an accompanying label that loosely summarises the text.²⁵ This labelling occurs in two of the Venetian publications, one published in 1624 and one in 1647.²⁶ The illustrations themselves in these two editions, however, are not alike; which brings us to the format of the second group of images. Whilst there are slight variations between the illustrations in many of the publications of the *Imagini*, that of the 1647 Venice edition shows an entirely different format from that described above (Fig. 21).²⁷ It follows the precedent of the 1615 Padua edition.²⁸ Instead of the woman on a goat being integrated into a single scene with the Venus-Cupid-Jocus triad, these versions copy the Celtes-

Apianus imagery more closely, in an oval format similar to the original circular woodcut; and the inscriptions *VENUS*, *CUPIDO* and *IOCUS* are reintroduced over the figures. Above, on a smaller scale, are two roundels: that on the left side depicts the woman on a goat with her foot on a tortoise, but in this case she is nude; that on the right shows a similar nude (again with the tortoise) sitting on a bed with a winged *putto* flying above.

More interesting, though, in terms of the role played by Jocus, is a slight change in the appearance of the puppet-head: instead of being portrayed wearing the Germanic headdress, this female head is depicted with hair at the top and several feathers hanging down from it. This particular variation in the image of Jocus, first used in an edition published in the city of Padua, may be subtly informative: the feathered headdress could, arguably, make reference to the image of Folly/*Stultitia* painted by Giotto in his Virtue and Vice Cycle in the Scrovegni Chapel, also in Padua (Fig. 22); or at least derive from a similar ethos.

Giotto's Folly is painted as a fat, buffoon-like man standing in profile, dressed as if to represent a bird: barefooted, with a feathered headdress and a feather-like tail. He also has bells at his waist, an item of dress common to court jesters of the period.²⁹ In art, Giotto's Fool is a unique representation,³⁰ although there is evidence that similar outfits were commonly worn at the Feast of Fools in France, Germany and England.³¹ Fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italian prints, probably of designs copied from north of the Alps, show

the court jester with a cockerel on his head (Fig. 23). Perhaps, by using the feathered headdress, Giotto was making a pictorial allusion to such a court-jester type of fool to illustrate his personification of the vice Folly; but unlike many medieval representations from beyond the Alps, his *Stultitia* is portrayed as a jolly, laughter-provoking character rather than an inept and irrational fool.

The illustrator of the Padua edition of Cartari's *Imagini*, in giving Jocus a feathered headdress, may, in turn, have been making a pictorial allusion to Giotto's Folly/*Stultitia*, a specifically local reference. If so, the implication would be that Jocus was interpreted as a representation of folly, or a similar buffoon-like fool. The hand-held, puppet-like head can be seen to resemble a *marotte* or fool-stick such as those commonly carried by jesters to amuse their audience. This was certainly the interpretation of Jocus in a later, French edition of Ripa's *Iconologie* (Paris, 1644), when the Celtes-Apianus image was used to illustrate the "*Charmes d'Amour*". There, the text describes and explains the meaning of the imagery: Venus is shown nude because of her lascivious disposition, and winged because she is inconstant; her son, Cupid, "*luy presente une Marotte, pour monstrier qu'elle n'aime qu'à folastrer & à rire*" (offers her a marotte, to show that she loves only to frolic and to laugh).

There was another, quite different, interpretation for the head or face held in the hand of the *putto* named Cupid, however: it was understood by some to represent a mask. A book published in Rome in 1656 illustrates a collection of gemstones compiled by Leonardo Agostini and dedicated to

Cosimo III de' Medici. It includes an illustration said to be of an antique carnelian gem which shows a winged, nude *putto* with a large mask over his head, his face appearing within its mouth.³² The image is labelled "*IL GIOCO CONPAGNO DI AMORE*" (Fig. 24). An accompanying explanation in the text states that *il Giuoco*, companion of Amor, is represented winged, conforming with the description of Horace: "*Sive tu mavis Erycina ridens quam Iocus circumvolat et Cupido.*" In addition it states:

Tale con la maschera al volto si vede delineato il Giuoco, tra gli Amori, in alcuni marmi antichi, vedendosi dui fanciulli: l'uno de' quali suona la lire, l'altro scherza con una larua nelle mani: scrittovi, AMOR, VENUS, e sopra quella maschera, o larva è notato LUSUS.

This description, that names the figure outlined within the mask as Jocus, associates the image with "an antique marble" in which two children can be seen, one of them playing a lyre, the other jesting with a mask in his hand; it had inscriptions *VENUS*, *AMOR* and, above the mask, *LUSUS*. This is clearly a description, presumably from memory, of the Celtes-Apianus woodcut, but Jocus is now named Lusus and the puppet head is described as a mask. Leonardo Agostini's illustration, together with its explanation, thereby suggests that a *putto* wearing a mask was an acceptable visual representation of Jocus, at least by the mid-seventeenth century.³³

Versions of the Celtes-Apianus imagery, with or without its labelling, continued to be published in a variety of books, even until the end of the eighteenth century.³⁴ Nevertheless, only one major painting has come to light

in which the artist used it as a direct source for his own imagery. The painting is known as The Golden Age (Fig. 25) and is currently attributed to Paolo Fiammingo (c.1540-1596).³⁵ It is the first of a set of four large, erotic paintings representing allegories of love, that, until recently, were thought to be the work of Agostino Carracci (1557-1602); this attribution was based on four engravings of the paintings which, since the seventeenth century, have been known as "*Gli Amori de' Carracci*."³⁶ Two of these were engraved by Carracci himself, including the one with the image of Jocus.³⁷

Agostino's engravings were catalogued by Malvasia in *Felsina pittrice* (1678). He identified the subject of the first of the set of four *Amori* as "*Il Secolo dell' Oro*", because it depicted harmony between lovers and sexual freedom; and this is the title currently accepted.³⁸ However, the title Reciprocal Love was used by Adam Bartsch in his *Peintre-Graveur* (1854-76) (where it is reproduced as No. 119), deriving from the verse that accompanies the engraving (Fig. 26): "*Del reciproco Amor, che nasce e viene / Da pia cagion di virtuoso affetto . . .*" (Reciprocal Love, that is born and comes as a result of virtuous affection)

Both titles appear to suit the contents of the painting: symmetrically disposed in an idyllic landscape setting, three naked couples recline in various attitudes of love and imminent intercourse; beyond them, two *putti* wrestle with a palm leaf, and a pair of swans swim together on a lake; in the distance, eight nudes dance in a circle, holding hands. Compositionally, the dominant

foreground couples bracket the figures that recede centrally into the distance; they are accompanied, at the very foreground edges, by two *erotes* that derive from the Celtes-Apianus woodcut.

Otto Kurz has traced the sources of the imagery and authoritatively interpreted not only this painting but the whole cycle. He recognised that, although the imagery can be related to various classical and humanistic material, much of the artist's inspiration came from Cartari's *Imagini*, not from the various original literary and visual sources.³⁹ The title Reciprocal Love, which Kurz prefers, accords not only with the verse attached to Agostino's engraving, but with the two putti fighting over a palm leaf who represent Eros and Anteros: Love and Reciprocal Love. This conflict between Eros and Anteros seems at variance with the mood of mutual love, joy and tranquillity that pervades the scene, but Cartari's description explains:

*Adunque l'amore cresce quando è posto in persona, che medisimamente ami, e chi è amato dee parimente amare, e questo mostrarono gli antichi per Cupido, e per Anterote . . . Stavano dunque due imagini, overo statue di fanciulli, e di loro uno era Cupido, che teneva in mano un ramo di palma, l'altro Anterote, il quale si sforzava di levargliele, e mostrava di affaticarsi assai, ne poteva però, quasi che debba con ogni suo sforzo mostrare chi risponde in amore di non amare punto meno di colui, che ama prima, e perciò si sforza Anterote di levare la palma di mano di Amore.*⁴⁰

(Love increases in one who at the same time loves and is loved with a love equal to his own. The ancients represent this by Cupid and Anteros . . . There were pictures of two children, one of them Cupid, holding a palm in his hands; the other Anteros, struggling to take it from him, but, despite all his endeavours, not succeeding. Thus, he who responds to love ought to show with all his might that he loves no less than he who

first displayed his feelings. This is the reason why Anteros struggles to take the palm from the hands of love.)

Kurz recognised that the title The Golden Age, first suggested by Malvasia, does not in itself conflict with his own preferred title, Reciprocal Love. He cites Theocritus's Idyll XII: "Verily then again were men of gold when the loved one is loved in his turn."⁴¹ Thomas Puttfarken, however, in his reassessment of the painting, is more insistent that it is only fully described by the title The Golden Age, an age of mutual love free from jealousy and unhappiness.⁴² He points to the ring of dancers in the background that traditionally belongs to depictions of the Golden Age; and he points out that singing and dancing were invented during that first age of the human race, according to Lucretius.⁴³

The embracing couples, the dancers, and Eros and Anteros have all been accounted for as necessary elements of a golden age of reciprocal love; but what is then the purpose of the two foreground *putti* derived from the Celles-Apianus woodcut? They have no traditional role in either descriptions or depictions of the Golden Age. Kurz, having carefully and extensively traced the source of their imagery, only cursorily explains their presence in this painting: "Venus, Love and Mirth are the tutelary gods of the Arcadian scene." This is a rather abrupt, though understandable, explanation of the role of these two figures in an harmonious love garden, and further consideration of their

physical presence in the subject of this particular painting is, therefore, warranted.

The figures, derived from the Celtes-Apianus woodcut by way of Cartari's *Imagini*, have been modified: the disposition of their bodies has been changed from the rigid profiles of the woodcut to the twisted *figura serpentinata* favoured by mannerist artists. The original winged "Venus" is transformed in the painting to a winged child, also playing the harp but without the myrtle coronet. This *amoretto* is portrayed reclining at the bottom left-hand corner of the picture, now partially cropped; it shows more clearly at the right side (reverse image) of Agostino Carracci's engraving (Fig. 26). In the setting of a joyful love garden with music, dancing and lovemaking, one is reminded that the harp is often found in the hands of Terpsichore, the Muse of dance and song. Thus it is an appropriate element that clarifies and supplements the pleasure and harmony of the occasion.

The standing figure at the right-hand side of the picture imitates the "CUPIDO" of Celtes by holding the puppet-head, "IOCUS". In the painting it is virtually unchanged: a winged *putto* holding the same female head by a pigtail. Agostino Carracci, in his engraved copy of the painting, changed Jocus so that instead of being held up by plaited hair (a difficult concept to accept) it is supported on a wooden stick making it look more definitely like a puppet or jester's *marotte*. Such an object of amusement, used to provoke laughter and enjoyment, conveys the sense that this is a cheerful, lighthearted occasion. In

fact, Jocus brings to mind another Muse, Thalia, the Muse of comedy, whose attributes evolved from a mask and staff into a jester's fool-stick.⁴⁴

Reinforcing the historic role of Jocus in literature, the subject of the painting reaffirms that Jocus was closely associated with sexual congress: an attribute of Venus that conveys the playfulness and fun of reciprocal lovemaking. To any viewer familiar with Cartari's *Imagini*, the combination of Cupid with Jocus and the harp-playing *amoretto* would immediately evoke the spirit, if not the presence, of Venus, the goddess who would be expected to preside over such a sexually idyllic scene.

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From the text of the *Psychomachia* of Prudentius, it is established that the personification of Jocus is a figure in the entourage of *Luxuria*, a Christian personification of lust and the counterpart of pagan Venus. The attributes of Jocus are designated as percussion-type musical instruments that associate him with the orgiastic processions of popular pagan deities in the time of Prudentius. The text gives no indication of the age of Jocus but several centuries later medieval illuminators portrayed him as a young man, giving him percussion instruments as his attributes. Invariably, these medieval illustrations are arranged so that the portrayal of Jocus is placed immediately before that of Amor; thus, the two figures are closely associated with one another visually.

The text of the Late Medieval *Ovide Moralisé* reiterates the association of these two figures, and, further, revives the Horatian triad of Venus with Cupid and Jocus. Jocus is described as the twin brother of Cupid and both are said to be portrayed naked and blind. The text emphasizes the dominant trait in their characters: folly. Whilst there are no extant illustrations of Jocus associated with the *Ovide Moralisé*, Cupid is portrayed in manuscripts as a young man; winged and blindfolded but usually clothed.

In the Renaissance period that followed, there was a revival of interest in depicting infants, similar to that evidenced in the Hellenistic Roman period. The physical appearance of Cupid, as portrayed in both paintings and prints, changed. In these, he is depicted as a naked *putto* in the antique Roman manner, thus demonstrating the kind of reintegration of classical personifications with their original classical form that has been recognised by Jean Seznec in his definitive work The Survival of the Pagan Gods.⁴³

A similar transformation, from youth to *putto*, might be expected in Renaissance portrayals of Jocus. The problem, however, is that Jocus has rarely been identified in Renaissance art. The evidence examined thus far in this study, apart from the one painted example, Fiammingo's Love in the Golden Age, has been limited to book illustration, where the representation of Jocus is reduced to a severed head, an inanimate attribute of Cupid. On the one hand, it appears to represent a *marotte*: a jester's prop, indicative of fun, playfulness and comedy, or even folly; but, on the other hand, it could represent a mask, the significance of which is, as yet, less clear, but will be examined in further detail later in this study.

The Celtes-Apianus imagery depended heavily on the Horatian allusion for its success; and successful it clearly was in terms of book illustration. It would be remarkable, however, if such a popular literary image had not been visualised in art well before the end of the sixteenth century and the execution of the Amori suite of paintings. It is likely, therefore, that it was, indeed,

painted but has remained unrecognised. The Horatian allusion would probably never have been associated with Celtes's gemstone drawing if he, himself, had not inserted the labelling to identify the figures.

From the historic literary evidence, a viewer would not be expected to identify Jocus as a female puppet, any more than as either a *marotte* or a mask. Rather, a depiction of a young male figure would be expected, probably a *putto* similar in appearance to Cupid, but identifiable by his own, distinctive attributes. The initial difficulty is in recognising such attributes. The evidence of the literary descriptions and manuscript illustrations examined in this chapter indicates that, unlike Cupid, Jocus had no traditionally-fixed iconography. However, it would be expected that artists would portray him with at least some of the attributes described in the literary sources. Historically, he has been associated with the vice *Luxuria*, or with Venus and Cupid; he has been given noise-making attributes by Prudentius; and he is sometimes identified with folly, as indicated in the *Ovide Moralisé* and the *Anticlaudianus*. In addition, since his name, Jocus, can mean play, his attributes may also have the appearance of children's toys.

A number of Italian works of art portray playing *putti* that have some, or all, of these attributes, yet the figures have remained unidentified. The following section, accordingly, examines the role of the playing *putto* in a variety of visual contexts; firstly, in order to determine its significance; and,

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secondly, to determine whether, in some circumstances, such *putti* can plausibly be identified as Jocus.

THREE

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLAYING *PUTTO* IN ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ART

CHAPTER III:1

LUDUS PUERORUM AND SEXUALITY

From the late fifteenth century onwards, playing *putti* were increasingly included in paintings and prints. The theme Children's Games, depicting frolicking infants and winged *amoretti* amid animals, flowers and fruits, became particularly popular in Italian art. It was one of the major themes used for the decoration of the *Palazzo del Tè* at Mantua; and painted by, amongst others, the artist Giulio Romano, who went to work there for the Gonzagas from 1524 until his death in 1546. The painting of some of the *putti*, interpreted as representing the famous "*Erotes*" of Philostratus (Imagines I, vi), are documented as being for a room near the secret garden of the *Palazzo del Tè* and painted in 1532.¹ Some of Romano's drawings for this series of paintings survive, and one of them depicts two *amoretti* on a basket full of

apples, supporting a garland, whilst a third is shown straddling a large bird and clasping it tightly round the neck; the bird's tail protrudes beneath the *putto's* buttocks,(Fig. 29).² The composition in some ways resembles a print by the Master of the Die taken from a tapestry design by Raphael (Fig. 30), one of a series ordered from Brussels by Pope Leo X.

The Pope's series of tapestries, called *Le Giu[ol]chi di Putti*, started a fashion for the theme that continued for three centuries. The tapestries were woven from the designs of Raphael, and were the origin of several similar series from different manufacturers during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.³ A number of the cartoons are preserved, although Pope Leo's tapestries themselves are no longer extant. Four of Raphael's designs were copied as prints by the Master of the Die (Figs. 30-33), but it is established that the full series was composed of twenty pieces, destined for the decoration of the *Sala di Constantino* at the Vatican.⁴ Vasari recounts in his *Vite* that Giovanni da Udine, a student of Raphael, prepared the cartoons in accordance with the master's intentions, and that the tapestries were then woven in Flanders.⁵ Unfortunately, Pope Leo X died in December 1521 without having been able to see the completion of the works.⁶

In choosing such a subject as *Le Giuochi di Putti* Pope Leo X, well-known for his love of jokes and laughter, has been credited with wishing to create a new spirit for the times, representing youth and gaiety. However, some interesting evidence has come to light which suggests that playing

children had a more significant, figurative meaning far removed from the innocence of childhood: the term "children's games" had strong sexual connotations that may well have appealed to particular predilections of the Pope's character. Surprisingly, the source of the evidence is alchemical.

In the early sixteenth century, the medical application of alchemy was at its peak, Paracelsus declaring that its true purpose was to heal the sick (not to make gold). Thus, local apothecaries were prescribing and making medicines, as well as selling cooking herbs, artists' paints and ladies' cosmetics. In addition, illustrated alchemical books to help the layman in the preparation of home remedies were readily available.⁷ The utilisation of alchemy was, therefore, a well-established part of society, not a remote and esoteric practise. By the fifteenth century, however, the theory of alchemy, as opposed to the practise, had become quite mystical, couched in elaborate symbolic imagery ranging from the religious to the philosophical. It is within the allegory and metaphor of alchemical treatises that the phrase "children's games" occurs.

It was maintained that certain substances, when mixed, bonded together in a mystical marriage. This stage in the alchemical process was called "conjunction" or, because of the sexual allusion, "*coitus*." The process was often depicted in manuscript illustrations as the act of copulation between a man and a woman within a scientific flask, the alchemical "marriage chamber" (Fig. 34). The alchemist Salmon Trismosin (teacher of Paracelsus) whose manuscripts and publications date from 1498 to his death in 1570, wrote in his

treatise *Aureum vellus* that this part of the alchemical process "sees nature rejoicing in itself, with Mercury in lighthearted courtship lusting after Lady Sulphur."⁸

Crucial for our discussion, however, this operation was also known by the unexpected allegorical title "*ludus puerorum*", children's games. Trismosin compared it to "the pleasures and high spirits of children doing frivolous things."⁹ In alchemical terms, then, the play of children became (or was, perhaps, already recognised as) synonymous with *coitus* as a metaphor for the chemical fusion of elements. Although it is difficult to assess the prevalence of this figurative phrase, the existence of treatises entitled *Ludus Puerorum* and *Clavis philosophorum, ludus puerorum et labor mulierum* attest that, in alchemical circles, the use of the allegorical expression "child's play" often took precedence over the technical term "conjunction".¹⁰

The figurative appellation "*ludus puerorum*" led to variations in the illustrations accompanying the process of conjunction in alchemical manuscripts and printed books. Rather than showing a copulating couple, some extant treatises depict a group of children at play. One, for example, shows naked *putti* frolicking over bubbling liquid (Fig. 35);¹¹ whilst that in Trismosin's *Splendor Solis* shows several children playing with their toys in the room of a house (Fig. 36): they ride hobbyhorses, brandish toy windmills, and generally play games.¹² There is no visual evidence in these illustrations to imply the physical consummation of the union of opposite elements, yet the

sexual connotations must have been readily evoked, at least by the alchemical fraternity.

The alchemical evidence, showing that "child's-play" was a recognisable euphemistic synonym for coitus, provides a new viewpoint from which to assess the subject matter of prints, tapestries and paintings depicting playing *putti* during the sixteenth century and later. Without implying any direct or intentional alchemical source, such artworks must, nevertheless, now be considered with a broader understanding of their possible appeal: for some patrons the attraction of the theme of *le giuochi di putti* may well have been the underlying sexual innuendo, rather than the sentimental enjoyment of frolicking infants. Indeed, the particular appeal was probably the very duality of the theme, a joke played on the naïve by the initiated. In terms of Pope Leo X's tapestries, it may well be significant that one of his circle, the poet Aurelius Augurellus (already mentioned above because of his use of Jocus in his poetry) was also an alchemist of some repute.¹³

In light of this evidence, a closer examination of the Master of the Die's four prints of Pope Leo X's tapestries reveals that, whilst the full meaning of each print is difficult to interpret, some details do, indeed, convey sexual or amorous messages. In the print illustrated in Fig. 31, for example, the ape, understood during the Renaissance period to mimic man's own base and lustful nature, is shown exhibiting a deliberate phallic display; and in the print illustrated in Fig. 32 the use of Cupid's bow and arrow to apparently strike the

wrestling youngsters adds an amorous aspect to their tight embrace. The prominent role given to birds in these prints may also be significant: *uccello*, 'bird' is a word used figuratively in Italy for the penis, even today (a fact that casts further light on the probable appeal of Giulio Romano's drawing of a *putto* straddling a bird, shown in Fig. 29 and described above, which now acquires an erotic/homoerotic significance). Other prints of playing *putti*, also by the Master of the Die after Raphael, allow further exploration of the sexual nature of the subject.

Frieze with a Child on a Goat (Fig.37) depicts a procession of *putti* moving from left to right. Two blow trumpets and two beat drums, whilst others carry toy whirligigs. At the left side one figure is shown riding on a tethered goat, and behind him two others carry a bird in a cage. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the goat, as we have seen in the previous section, was a symbol of lust deriving from Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica*, where it is described as symbolic of male fecundity.¹⁴ The child on a goat in the Master of the Die's frieze engraving, therefore, may well be an image that was selected with the intention of similarly representing both lust and male fecundity. The attendant figures and their attributes can be interpreted to support this assumption. It has already been suggested that visual imagery was consciously linked to colloquial language; hence, it is interesting to note that one Italian term for a whirligig, such as those held by some of the *putti*, is "*giostra*", which, like "*giuoco*", was a term used euphemistically for sexual

intercourse.¹⁵ In addition, "*giostra*" means a tournament, and *putti* are often depicted in Renaissance art mimicking a tournament contest using whirligigs instead of lances; indeed, the lance is another well-known allusion to the penis. The sexual connotations behind the word-play are consistent with the interpretation of the goat in this procession as a symbol of masculine prowess, and it is apparent that male sexual symbolism pervades the engraving. The caged bird carried by an *amoretti* at the back of the procession, as well as the tethered goat held by another little love god, possibly have the significance of male prowess held in control (or captivity) by "love" (as opposed to the unrestrained passion of lust).

The entire content of the Master of the Die's print Frieze with Child on a Goat relates to a second, similar one, entitled Frieze with the Triumph of Love (Fig. 38). The two prints could readily be aligned to form one great procession. The second print similarly portrays many *putti*: some blow horns, and one child with wings rides piggyback on another whilst brandishing a whirligig. The focus of this print is a winged *putto* holding a pair of flaming torches, probably intended to represent Cupid. He is depicted riding in a chariot drawn by two goats and preceded by a lion. Again, the presence of the goats and the whirligig symbolically imply male sexuality. The lion has various meanings, but most notably in secular art it signifies *fortezza*, strength. The inclusion of winged *erotes* and the flaming torches of passion, coupled with the triumphal chariot, trumpets and drums, suggests that this procession

represents a triumph of carnal love. In light of this interpretation of the images and attributes, both prints together appear to signify a symbolic triumph of love over unbridled masculine sexuality and prowess.

The Master of the Die's fourth print after Raphael's tapestry designs for Pope Leo X is itself a "triumph" (Fig. 33). The central *putto* with crown and sceptre holds the papal keys of St Peter, whilst above his head, a shining sun contains Leo's namesake, the lion (the sun in Leo also has favourable zodiacal significance). To the right, the fabled phoenix, having lived to a great age, rises reincarnated from the flames, young and vigorous. The design can be read as a triumph of Leo's pontificate, parodied by children, but an underlying subtext is apparent, suggested by the above investigation: that this is also a triumph of the eternal masculine vigour of Leo himself. Since all of these prints of playing *putti* by the Master of the Die are apparently derived from Raphael's designs, it is possible that all of them were developmental ideas for Leo's tapestries, or for accompanying wall-paintings reiterating the "*ludus puerorum*" theme.

Another print, which is anonymous, uses the theme of children's games to convey a moral message. It depicts four playing *putti*, three with a skipping rope and one with a drum (Fig. 39), with the accompanying inscription: *ADOLESCENTIA ET VOLUPTAS VANA SUNT*.¹⁶ The print demonstrates that youthfulness was linked in the Renaissance mind with sensual pleasure, and that playing infants were considered an appropriate illustration of both

concepts. It is not surprising to find that during the same period there are references to sensual pleasure in connection with play in Fr. Ambrosius Calepini's *Dictionarius* of 1519: "*Losus vero et lusio ad voluptatem magis pertinent sine ulla spe lucri aut periculo damni: puerorum proprie dicuntur*" (True play and sensual play are more pleasurable when without hope of reward or danger of damnation: it is said appropriately of children).¹⁷ Whilst sensual play does not necessarily mean erotic play, the term *voluptas* frequently does imply eroticism.

The association of play with sexuality is, in effect, a reiteration of the role of Jocus encountered in literary sources. Three Italian works of art have been found in which the role of a playing *putto* (resembling Jocus) fulfils an important function in understanding the meaning of each image as a whole. Analysis and interpretation of these three works of art appears to affirm the sexual significance of the playing infants, while also introducing an additional element: folly.

CHAPTER III:2

THE MASKED *PUTTO* IN LOT AND HIS DAUGHTERS BY BONIFAZIO DE PITATI

The painting Lot and his Daughters (Fig. 40), attributed to Bonifazio de' Pitati (1487-1553) includes a pair of playing *putti*. It was painted around 1545, probably in the artist's studio in Venice, and is now in the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, Virginia. The complete painted composition encompasses the entire biblical story of Lot: in the background, Bonifazio has depicted the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, the turning of Lot's wife to a pillar of salt, and the flight of Lot and his daughters; while the central part of the composition shows both the drunkenness of Lot and the incestuous designs upon him of his two daughters.¹⁸

The foreground scene of seduction is portrayed as the dominant aspect of the narrative and thus appears to be the *raison d'être* of the painting. To the left, one daughter is shown sitting across Lot's lap with her bared leg displayed; she plies him with wine, but at the same time she has been painted looking directly at the viewer as if to include that person, too, in the seduction. She presumably represents the elder daughter who, in the biblical story, suggests making Lot drunk in order to have intercourse with him: "Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him" (Genesis XIX, 32).

The second daughter is shown seated almost on the ground and holding a mirror. The two *putti* play behind her, one holding the back of her dress whilst the other runs towards them holding a mask over his face. This group is of particular interest in helping to determine the role of the playing *putti*. On one level of understanding, Lot's second daughter appears to be preparing herself for her own forthcoming role in the seduction of her father. She, like her sister, has been painted as if she is aware of the presence of the viewer: this is implied by the turn of her head and by her self-conscious adjustment of the sleeve of her dress, thus drawing attention to her bared shoulder. Her turned head also suggests that she has heard the activity of the two playing *putti* behind her. The inclusion of the *putti*, so closely associated visually with the daughter holding a mirror, implies that the artist intended a further, allegorical meaning to be conveyed by this group. Thus, in order to determine the role played in the narrative by the *putti*, the allegorical role of the accompanying daughter must first be established.

Determining the significance in art of the image of a woman with a mirror can pose problems, since the mirror attribute has several different, sometimes antithetical, meanings. In the Late Medieval cathedrals of France the vice *Luxuria* is portrayed as a woman holding a mirror, as in the case of the windows of the Gothic cathedrals of Notre Dame, Auxerre and Lyons.¹⁹ However, in both classical literature and the Bible a mirror is associated with the virtue Wisdom.²⁰ Similarly, in Italian art the mirror became one of the

attributes of the virtue Prudence, emulating Giotto's example at the Arena Chapel in Padua.

Writers of Late Medieval literature often used the analogy of the book as a mirror: the readers see their own activities reflected in the words, in most cases a reflection of the foolishness of human behaviour.²¹ Consequently, there developed an association between the mirror and Folly: court jesters would talk to their own reflections in a hand-mirror, a device which eventually combined with the Fool's club to produce the fool-headed *marotte*.²² In addition, mirrors have been frequently used in Northern Europe to depict the sins of both vanity and pride. With such a variety of possibilities, the significance of a mirror in art is often ambiguous and can only be deduced from an understanding of the particular context in which it appears.

In Bonifazio's painting, the elements of seduction and incest that are the focus of the narrative suggest vice rather than virtue; in particular the vice *Luxuria, or Lust*. This interpretation is supported by the pose of the daughter who holds the mirror: the artist has portrayed her suggestively revealing both a bared leg and a bared shoulder.²³ Bonifazio was undoubtedly aware of a similar, local, and readily-accessible example carved on the capital of one of the columns in the lower Arcade of the Doge's palace in Venice.

Completed in the first quarter of the fifteenth century, the principal sculptures of these octagonal capitals depict personifications of the Virtues and

Vices. In The Stones of Venice John Ruskin describes the image of *Luxuria* that was carved on the first side of the tenth capital (now much deteriorated and removed to the palace museum): "A woman with a jewelled chain across her forehead, smiling as she looks into a mirror, exposing her breast by drawing down her dress with one hand" (Fig. 41). The sculpture is inscribed with the words: "*LUXURIA SUM IMENSA*."²⁴

The entire series of sculptures was, in Ruskin's words, "at a height of little more than eight feet above the eye [and] might be read like the pages of a book by those . . . who habitually walked beneath the shadow of this great arcade." By depicting Lot's second daughter lowering her dress from her shoulder, Bonifazio was employing the same visual devise used by that anonymous, earlier artist of Venice to convey the character of the vice *Luxuria*. The sin of vanity is an implied characteristic of the vice, equally conveyed by the mirror attribute; and in the Ducal Palace arcade, the seventh side of the capital of the same pillar shows *Vanitas* personified as a woman looking into a mirror on her lap.

Returning to Bonifazio's panel, having determined the probable allegorical significance of the woman with a mirror it remains to account for the presence of the two playing *putti* behind her. What can be their significance in an allegory of Lust? The masked *putto* is the most interesting and informative image of the two. Since the Middle Ages, the mask had been considered to be evidence of evil: the Church had reiterated its hostility to the

use of such a disguise in numerous moral treatises and edicts.²⁵ The most prevalent social use of masks was at Carnival time, by mummers, jugglers and *ioculatores*, especially at the Feast of Fools; yet despite this apparently lighthearted merrymaking and humourous intention, under the disapprobation of the Church the mask as a symbol in art acquired strongly negative connotations.

Today, the mask is most commonly thought to have signified deceit. This interpretation derives largely from Ripa's *Iconologia* in its many editions, where masks were used to indicate deceit in a variety of contexts.²⁶ Ripa compiled his original edition at the end of the sixteenth century and the amendments of later editions were all made in the seventeenth century. There is documentary evidence to support the view that the mask was also used by some artists of the early sixteenth century to imply deceit: Leonardo da Vinci, for example, wrote in his notes: "the mask is for lying and falsehood which conceal truth."²⁷

Vasari, however, used masks to convey a quite different meaning: they could represent either virtue or vice depending on whether the mask was a "beautiful" or an "ugly" one. He included two masks in his portrait of Lorenzo the Magnificent in 1533 (Fig. 42) and explained their meaning in a letter to

Alessandro de' Medici for whom the portrait was being painted:

Il zoccolo sarà intaglio, et farauuisi dentro queste lettere: "Sicut maiores michi ita et ego post[eris] mea uirtute prelussi." Sopra questo ho fatta una maschera bruttissima, figurata per il Vitio, la quale stando à diacere in su la fronte, sarTa conculcata da un' purissimo uaso, pien di rose et di uiole, con queste lettere: "Vitus omnium uas." Harà questo uaso una

cannella da uersare acqua appartatamente, nella quale sara infilzata una maschera pulita, bellissima, coronata di laruo; et in fronte queste lettere ò uero nella canella: "Premium virtutis"

(The pedestal will be carved and there will be words upon it: "As my ancestors lighted the way for me, so by my virtue I light the way for my descendants." Above this I have made a very ugly mask representing Vice, lying on its forehead. It will be overwhelmed by a fine, delicate vase full of roses and violets with these words: "Virtue embraces all." To draw off the water this vase will have a spout which will run through a very beautiful mask, crowned with laurel. On its forehead, or else on the spout, are the words: "The reward of virtue."²⁸

Vasari makes no suggestion of deceit, and, once more, it is apparent that one object can have more than one meaning: the mask, like the mirror, is such a device. A valid interpretation of the significance of any object in a work of art relies partly on the correct identification of the context, and partly on comparisons with similar images of the same period and region. Rather than considering the mask in isolation, therefore, it is more instructive, in this case, to compare the masked *putto* in Bonifazio's painting with other masked *putti* depicted in the same period.

A *putto* with a mask is a relatively common feature of sixteenth-century Italian works of art. It is a motif seen in prints, manuscript decoration and relief panels, as well as in secular easel paintings and frescoed wall decorations. Artists most often show two or three playing *putti*, one of which is depicted playfully frightening the others by holding a mask over his face or head. The print Frieze with a Child on a Goat (Fig. 37) by the Master of the Die, discussed in the previous chapter, places such a group into a larger and

more informative context: it has been demonstrated that the frieze has elements of male sexual symbolism conveyed through images and word-play. A similar play on words and images conceivably applies to the masked *putto* who forms a part of the same procession. The Italian word for mask is "*maschera*" suggesting disguise and, thus, deceit. However, a very similar-sounding noun is "*maschio*", the virile masculine principle; in particular, it relates to instinctive, irrational and sensual behaviour (in contrast to "*uomo*" which indicates rationality, caution and control of instincts).²⁹ "*Maschio*" is also used euphemistically for the "*organi genitali maschili*."³⁰ Could it be that the visual image of a *putto* with a mask was being used punningly to suggest virile masculinity or the male sexual organ? Certain visual evidence supports this analysis.

The plausibility of an erotic interpretation of this motif is particularly reinforced by an image that is the focus of a sixteenth-century decorative print by Agostino Veneziano (after either Raphael or Giovanni da Udine).³¹ Set in a small panel, a male figure is depicted hiding behind a very large, bearded mask; and he approaches a reclining nude woman (Fig. 43). She is shown with one leg raised in the air as if to fend off the masked figure. The effect, however, is sexually provocative: it conveys the dominance of the man over the woman, who exposes herself to him invitingly even as she raises her leg in defence. The comic and playful effect of the image appears to be a means of

applauding the "instinctive, irrational and sensual" qualities of masculine behaviour.

An almost identical composition occurs in an anonymous engraving in which two putti are portrayed (Fig. 44): the mask, as in the Veneziano print, is bearded, but in this case it is more obviously satyric and has a suggestively prominent nose. The child with the raised leg holds a dog under her arm, as if restraining it. (Such lap-dogs are known to have been used as symbols of the female pudenda.) A related group, but without the use of a mask, is found in a detail of a possible wedding procession depicted on the front panel of a Florentine, late-fifteenth-century cassone (Fig. 45c): there, in a similar pose, a child holding a dog appears to resist another infant, holding a toy windmill, who thrusts forward a fluttering bird. In light of the possible figurative meaning of these elements of the image, the meaning, again, strongly conveys sexual advances; in this context, the children are probably intended to emphasise the nature of the amorous intentions of the courting couples behind them.

Returning now to Bonifazio's painting of Lot and his Daughters: the masked *putto* accompanying the daughter with a mirror was probably intended to signify the same kind of male sexuality. The mask has the face of a mature man with a strongly defined nose, imitating the face of Lot, himself. Thus, the

masked *putto* can be seen as playing an appropriate part in the narrative, indicating allegorically that the daughters arouse Lot's *maschio* nature, leading to his having intercourse with them. At the same time the mask is a visual reminder of the deceit being perpetrated on Lot by his daughters as they help him to become drunk. Such an interpretation is very apt for an allegory of Lust. By utilising the woman-with-a-mirror motif, a well-understood visual symbol of vice, Bonifazio, arguably, instilled a moral dimension into the narrative, thus implying condemnation of the daughters' libidinous activities.

Interestingly, there is an addendum to the story of Lot and his daughters: the Bible states that from their incestuously conceived offspring descended the tribes of the Moabites and the Ammonites:

Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.
And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day.
And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Ben-ammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon today.
(Genesis, 19, 36-38)

A print that was produced during the same period as Bonifazio's painting, entitled *Luxuria* (Fig. 46), indirectly reminds the reader of this element in the story of Lot; the background imagery and the lines of an accompanying inscription relate to the lust of the children of Moab and Ammon:

*Omnia pervertit Veneris vesana Libido,
Iura, fidem, patriam, seque, suosque, Deos.
Sic Moabi natus Israel quaerit et Ammon
Germanae impatiens ardet amore suae.*

(The mad lust of Venus perverts everything / laws, faith, heredity,
oneself and one's Gods. / Thus Israel seeks out the daughters of Moab,
and Ammon / avidly burns with love for his sister.)

This inscription, exemplified by the two scenes in the background imagery of the print, provides evidence that in the sixteenth century, the behaviour of Lot's descendents was perceived to be a highly appropriate example of the power of Venus and the vice of *Luxuria*/Lust. The foreground imagery not only depicts a Venus-like figure beside a goat (as illustrated in Cartari's *Imagini*), but also shows a pair of masks on the ground at the goat's feet. The meaning of a pair of masks in this context is not clear; the facial features of both show empty eyes and upturned, smiling mouths, so that they do not suggest the classical masks of Comedy and Tragedy; neither do they accord with Vasari's descriptions of the masks of Virtue and Vice; but the repeated appearance of masks in scenes of lust must be significant.³²

Despite its association with lustfulness, there is an anomaly in the story of Lot: the book of Genesis implies that there was a positive rather than a negative reason for the daughters' seduction of their father: their actions, apparently, were not conceived in lust, but were designed to preserve the seed of their virtuous father, by then an old man with no sons to continue his line. Consequently, the act of incest, which might seem immoral at first sight, can be construed in the circumstances as a highly prudent course of action. Nevertheless, evidence to suggest that the Church interpreted the story in this positive way during the sixteenth century has not been forthcoming: biblical

exegesis of the period commonly emphasises the sinfulness of incest and the effect of drunkenness in robbing Lot of his reason.

Notwithstanding this evidence, the fact remains that in Renaissance Italy a woman with a mirror was used to personify the virtue Prudence as well as the vice Lust.³³ Similarly, the mask carried connotations of deceit despite being used as a sexually suggestive image. Thus, Bonifazio's painting may conceivably have carried a deliberate dual meaning. Interestingly, there are other works of art of the same period which, although utilising imagery very similar to that of Bonifazio's foreground group, have been identified and generally accepted solely as allegories of Prudence. In order to explore this issue further, various copies of one such drawing, attributed to Michelangelo, are examined next.

CHAPTER III:3

THE MASKED *PUTTO* IN DRAWINGS OF PRUDENCE AFTER MICHELANGELO

There are several copies of the drawing known as Prudence by various followers of Michelangelo: of these, one is in the Uffizi Gallery and has been attributed to Battista Franco (Fig. 47);³⁴ one in the Ambrosiana is signed "Domenichino" (Fig 48);³⁵ and one in the British Museum has been attributed to Baccio Bandinelli (Fig. 49).³⁶ As in Bonifazio's painting of Lot and his Daughters, each drawing depicts a seated woman who is holding a mirror, whilst *putti* play around her, one of which holds a mask over his face. In contrast to the conclusions of the previous chapter, the woman with a mirror has consistently been identified as Prudence rather than *Luxuria*, and this calls into question the role of the *putti* who accompany her.³⁷

The identification derives mainly from the drawings' apparent similarity to a description in a 1577 inventory of the collection of drawings belonging to Giulio Clovio. This collection included one drawing by Clovio himself after Michelangelo, described in the inventory as "*Una figura di prudenza con due puttini di Michelangelo fatta da Don Clovio*"³⁸ (A figure of Prudence with two infants after Michelangelo, made by Don Clovio). The works under

consideration here are thought to be other copies of Michelangelo's now-lost drawing. The description from Giulio Clovio's inventory is short and cursory: it names a figure called Prudence but does not describe any identifying attributes. It further mentions two *putti*, which accords with the drawing in the Ambrosiana collection, although other versions usually depict three *putti* rather than two.

The evidence suggesting that the now lost drawing by Michelangelo was, indeed, the prototype for these extant, School of Michelangelo drawings is speculative and rather tenuous. The assumption is based on the interpretation of a woman with a mirror as a depiction of Prudence, despite the existing evidence that the device of a mirror is open to a number of different interpretations, notably as an identifying attribute for *Luxuria*. This ambiguity demands a more extensive analysis of the contents of the composition of these drawings.

The drawings are all remarkably alike except in terms of style. In each, the focus is a seated, clothed woman who looks directly into a hand mirror. A *putto*, leaning on her knee, reaches out a hand to ward off a second *putto* who is portrayed wearing a turban and cloak, with an upside-down mask over his face. Sometimes, as in both the Uffizi and the British Museum drawings, a third *putto* is faintly sketched as if hiding behind the woman, burying his face in the folds of her skirt. Some modern scholars, having interpreted the woman with a mirror as Prudence, have subsequently identified the *putto* with the

mask as Folly, her traditional and well-established antagonist.³⁹ This interpretation is based on an iconographic tradition that is most prevalent in examples of medieval rather than Renaissance art. In order to assess its validity in terms of the imagery employed in these drawings, some visual and literary precedents of the medieval tradition require brief examination.

The Prudence-versus-Folly conflict is a variation of that expounded in ancient classical times by Aristotle: he describes the virtue *Wisdom/Sapientia* as the antagonist of Folly.⁴⁰ Since both Wisdom and Prudence personified sagacity, they became virtually interchangeable in many contexts, reinforced by Biblical examples: "Qui sapiens corde est appellabitur prudens" / "The wise in heart shall be called prudent" (Proverbs 16, 21). They were also linked in medieval secular literature: in the *Anticlaudianus*, for example, Prudence has two sisters, Wisdom and Reason. There, she is endowed with the symbol of the serpent (based on words in the gospel of St. Matthew (10, 16): "Be ye therefore prudent, like the serpents . . . ") and also the mirror (an attribute of classical and biblical precedent associated with wisdom).⁴¹ In art, the serpent became the most enduring part of the iconography of Prudence, the mirror only occurring in later visual representations, particularly in Italian art.

In the *Anticlaudianus* a profligate army of vices oppose Prudence and they are led by Folly. The development of a specific personification of Folly, both in art and in literature, was essentially a Late Medieval phenomenon in Europe occurring outside Italy.⁴² The earliest manifestations in visual

imagery appeared in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; in these, Folly is usually cast either as the sinful man who denies God, or as the vice antagonistic to Prudence. In the context of this study, a brief appraisal of these earlier portrayals of Folly helps to clarify their development in European art. This, in turn, can be related to the classically-based *putto* that appears in the drawings after Michelangelo.

Prior to the fourteenth century, folly was considered throughout Europe to be both a sin and a vice, and as such was invariably personified in art and literature as a mad or deranged figure, the Fool. In these medieval personifications he is usually depicted as a man dressed scantily in a loose-fitting garment; and he consistently holds a club and a round object which he eats (Fig. 50).⁴³ The best surviving visual examples of Folly as the vice that opposes the virtue Prudence (which are of specific interest in relation to the drawings after Michelangelo) occur in the sculpted Virtue and Vice cycles of the Gothic cathedrals of France (Figs. 51 a and b).⁴⁴ There, he is usually carved looking backwards, away from the direction in which he walks. The posture suggests instability, implying that the foolish man makes life difficult for himself by taking a rough and hazardous path: by not looking where he is going he is failing to look to the future consequences of his present actions, thus echoing the Biblical passage "there is no judgement in their goings: they have made them crooked paths . . . and judgement is turned away backward" (Isaiah 59, 8-14).

Portrayals of the cardinal virtue, Prudence, enjoyed popularity for several centuries, but, judging by surviving visual evidence, the inclusion of Folly among the major vices was uncommon in art after the medieval period, in most of Western Europe. Nevertheless, the tradition of folly opposing wisdom and being sinful had widespread circulation during the following centuries when it was reiterated in literature by the Italian-born St Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-74), in his influential *Summa Theologica*. In this major work of theology Aquinas considers: "*Utrum stultitia opponatur sapientiae*" (Whether folly may be opposed to wisdom) and "*Utrum stultitia sit peccatum*" (Whether folly is a sin). Ultimately, he affirms each proposition.⁴⁵

The earliest extant portrayal of Folly in Italian art occurs in Giotto's Virtue and Vice cycle in the Scrovegni Chapel at Padua (c.1305) where Folly/*Stultitia* is again paired with the virtue Prudence.⁴⁶ Compared to other European examples, such as those on the French cathedrals, Giotto was quite innovative in his depictions of both personifications. His portrayal of Folly shows a fat, buffoon-like man with a feathered headdress and a feather-like tail (Fig. 22).⁴⁷ Giotto portrayed Prudence as a pedagogical figure seated at a desk, without her traditional attribute, the serpent: instead, he painted her holding a mirror in one hand and compasses in the other, with an open book on the desk (Fig. 52).

It became common practice in Italy, thereafter, to depict Prudence with a mirror in her hand following Giotto's example, although usually the traditional

attribute of a serpent is also included, thus preventing any misinterpretation of the images owing to the variety of different iconographic meanings attached to the mirror as symbol. It was also popular in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to paint Prudence *bifrons*.⁴⁸

Returning, now, to the group of drawings after Michelangelo, entitled Prudence: further analysis of the imagery, in light of the visual precedents of both Prudence and Folly, helps to establish whether this identification is plausible, or whether there is a more convincing alternative interpretation of the woman with a mirror and her companion *putti*. The woman who is depicted as the focus of each drawing does, in some respects, resemble Giotto's Prudence in the Arena Chapel: both are clothed and seated and both look into a mirror held in the hand. However, there are also crucial differences: not only are no supplementary identifying attributes signifying Prudence included in the drawings, but, in each case, the woman portrayed there is less austere than Giotto's image of Prudence.

A close examination of the drawings after Michelangelo reveals that, unlike Giotto's depiction of matronly virtue, this woman was intended to be subtly voluptuous. She is drawn wearing a dress which reveals her ample breasts and nipples; and she raises one knee, slightly drawing up the fabric of her skirt with the extended forefinger of her right hand. These subtle visual

signals in the female figure are difficult to equate with a personification of Prudence. Instead, they are more reminiscent of Bonifazio's portrayal of Lot's daughter, a figure which strong evidence suggests is a personification of the vice *Luxuria*.

A further problem in accepting the title of these drawings as Prudence is the presence of the accompanying *putti*, who look like boisterous children playing around their mother. How can they be accounted for in terms of traditional Prudence imagery? As mentioned above, the dominant *putto*, drawn holding an inverted mask to his face, wearing a kind of turban, and with a cloak that seems to conceal a humpback, has been identified as Folly, the traditional antagonist of Prudence. Initially, then, the plausibility of this identification is examined.

Although masks were used at the Feast of Fools, there is no direct evidence that a masked *putto* was recognised as a personification of Folly in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the image of childish play does imply foolishness and it may be that the figure portrayed in the drawings was intended to imitate one particular kind of deformed unfortunate sometimes used to amuse the courtiers by "playing the fool". Indeed, in Tuscany the term "*gobbo*" hunchback, was used in the game of cards for the jack or knave, analagous to the fool, perhaps. In terms of visual precedent, however, there is no similarity between the drawing of this mischievous masked child (resembling a classical *putto*) and either the portrayals of Folly on the French

cathedral façades, or Giotto's innovative Italian buffoon in the Scrovegni Chapel. Of course, this in itself does not preclude the possibility of a newly invented folly-type; but, if this is so, it is difficult to account for the presence of the remaining putti that have been included in the drawings.

The figure of the woman has already been shown to be drawn with a number of details that are sexually suggestive. It is likely, therefore, that the playing *putti* probably have an appropriate supporting role. For example, in keeping with the images of playing *putti* discussed at the start of this section, they could be a visual reference to "*ludus puerorum*", used figuratively to suggest coitus. In similar vein, the cloak of the masked *putto* may simply be intended to reiterate "*maschere*", a pun on "*maschio*", as suggested in the previous chapter in reference to Bonifazio's painting of Lot and his Daughters.⁵⁰ Interpreted in this way, the drawings could, arguably, be an allegory of *Luxuria*, in keeping with the similar detail of Bonifazio's painting. Alternatively, to cloak is to deceive, and, coupled with the mask, the *putto*'s attributes may imply deception: perhaps a reference to the woman deceiving herself by being concerned with such transient values as beauty. The drawing could then be understood as a depiction of *Vanitas*; but these two interpretations are not mutually exclusive.

Although about a century later than the drawings under consideration, Leonardo Agostino's illustration of *Il Giuoco compagno di amore* (Fig. 24) is also of some interest here, because it serves to link the *putto* with a mask to the

previous discussion of the iconography of Jocus.⁵¹ If the masked putto was, indeed, recognisable as a manifestation of Jocus, companion of Amor, he was probably also recognisable as a member of the entourage of *Luxuria*, as described in the *Psychomachia* of Prudentius.⁵²

To sum up, the evidence that these drawings each represents Prudence rests on their apparent resemblance to the description of an unknown drawing by Michelangelo in the inventory of Giulio Clovio's collection. Whilst initially appealing, this evidence remains circumstantial as there is no evidence to suggest that these drawings are, indeed, versions of that being described in Clovio's collection. The identification of the seated woman as Prudence is, in itself, tenuous, and the consequent identification of the putto with a mask as a personification of her antagonistic vice, Folly, is not well-supported by available visual evidence.

The alternative suggestion offered here is that the masked putto, in common with that portrayed in Bonifazio's painting of *Lot and his Daughters*, signifies both male sexuality, play and foolishness, all of which, arguably, are personified in art by the figure of Jocus, companion of both Venus and her Christianised equivalent, *Luxuria*. This proposal has strong visual and literary evidence to support it which is lacking when identifying this figure as the vice, Folly, who opposes Prudence. The juxtaposition of a voluptuous woman holding a mirror with playing *putti*, one of which plays with a mask, is so similar to the imagery used by Bonifazio in *Lot and his Daughters* that the

intention of a similar meaning, namely to personify *Luxuria*, cannot be overlooked.

The possibility does exist, however, that at the time that Giulio Clovio's inventory was written, in 1577, after the publication of the edicts of the Council of Trent, it was perhaps politic to redefine the works of art in one's collection: it would have been preferable to own works that conveyed the supremacy of virtue rather than the temptations of vice. The superficial similarity in the iconography of *Luxuria* and Prudentia, namely, the common use of a woman with a mirror, would have made reinterpretation of an allegory of Lust into an allegory of Prudence an easy and expedient task. The playfully foolish behaviour of the masked *putto* and his companions, reinterpreted as personifying Folly, would have easily facilitated this transformation.

Another work of art, a much earlier panel-painting by Giovanni Bellini from the end of the previous century, has elements in common with both the drawings after Michelangelo and Bonifazio's painting of Lot and his Daughters: it, too, portrays a woman with a mirror accompanied by *putti* (although not a *putto* with a mask); and it, too, has been entitled Prudence, an identification which has already met with some scholarly scepticism over the years. An analysis of the contents of this painting contributes new elements to

the debate on meaning of the motif of a playing *putto*. Bellini's painting thus forms the basis of the following chapter.

CHAPTER III:4

THE PLAYING *PUTTO* IN THE ALLEGORY OF PRUDENCE BY GIOVANNI BELLINI

The search for a viable explanation of the significance of the playing *putto* in Italian Renaissance art is further facilitated by an examination of a small panel painted by Giovanni Bellini (c. 1430-1516), and identified as An Allegory of Prudence by Gustav Ludwig in 1906 (Fig. 53). It is one of a set of five paintings which together are thought to have been designed to decorate a furniture-piece called a *restello*: a kind of small, mirrored rack for toilet articles.⁵³ The set of panels, whose enigmatic iconography has been variously interpreted this century, but not definitively resolved, is in the Academy in Venice.⁵⁴ Only this one painting of the set is of specific interest to this discussion, although the meaning of all five panels is probably linked. Nevertheless, the Prudence panel will be analysed here in isolation since the subject matter must have been intended to have its own, independent, meaning.

The painting depicts a naked woman with long, loose hair, who stands on a pedestal and holds a large, circular mirror in her right hand. At her feet, two *putti* lounge against the base of the pedestal, one in a tunic, the other nude, each casually holding a long, straight horn or trumpet. On a lower level, in the right foreground, a third *putto* is shown marching past and beating a little drum

which hangs from his neck; although otherwise naked, he wears a red cloak around his shoulders and a laurel wreath on his head. The nude woman is represented looking directly down at this third *putto*, whilst pointing at the reflected image in her mirror. This reflection also shows a figure in a red cloak, thereby suggesting that it is intended to relate to the foreground *putto*; the face, however, is not childlike but is distorted into that of a demon.

Unlike the drawings after Michelangelo, the identification of Bellini's panel as an allegory of Prudence has already met with some scholarly scepticism, suggesting that the significance of the contents should be reassessed.⁵⁵ Various different interpretations suggest themselves, and each is evaluated in turn. Looking first for evidence in support of Ludwig's identification: the mirror itself could, indeed, suggest that the woman in Bellini's painting is Prudence. Such an identification, as we have seen, would be in keeping with other Italian representations, notably Giotto's. However, Bellini's nude has no other recognisable attributes of Prudence, such as a serpent, to affirm that intention.

Bellini has directed her gaze so that she appears to be associated most particularly with the playful child making a noise on his drum. It is reasonable to assume that if she does, indeed, represent Prudence, this particular *putto* would be intended to represent her traditional adversary, Folly. There is some visual support for such an identification: for example, a similar drum is depicted in the hands of a Fool/Jester in the Florentine engraving Fight for the

Hose (Fig. 23) (a figure already mentioned in comparison with Giotto's depiction of Folly);⁵⁶ and, like Bellini's panel, the print is estimated to have been executed in the second half of the fifteenth century.⁵⁷ The admonitory quality painted by Bellini in the woman's glance towards the playing *putto*, and her finger pointing to the demonic reflection of the same *putto* in her mirror, gives further support to the possibility that they are antagonists.

In addition, Bellini's painting shows a combination of classical and northern elements: his inclusion of classical *putti* contrasts with his portrayal of the nude. She is depicted with small breasts, enlarged belly and inelegant legs; a figurative type that is a departure from the Italian ideal of classical beauty and proportion. This kind of figuration is more typical of northern European art. In Venice, where Bellini lived and worked, northern prints became popular amongst Venetian collectors in both the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and they would, therefore, have been another source of locally available imagery.⁵⁸ Amongst such prints are many which depict a nude female as the central focus. Frequently, her companion is a fool or jester, the northern device invariably used to signify Folly.

A good example, contemporaneous with Bellini's panel and with a number of visual similarities, is a print by the important fifteenth-century Rhineland engraver, Master E.S. (Fig. 55). Not only is the nude in this print of the same figurative type as Bellini's, but, in addition, she is depicted with a

similar circular mirror. Unusually, in neither case does the woman look at her own reflection. Instead, she is depicted holding the mirror in such a way that it shows the reflection of her companion. In the print by Master E.S., that companion is a Fool/Jester. If such a print had been a source for Bellini, then, by analogy, it would appear to confirm that the drum-playing *putto* represented Folly. However, neither in the print by Master E.S., nor in any of the similar northern prints, is the nude woman identified as Prudence: she is identified rather as a personification of either *Vanitas* or *Luxuria*.

Ludwig's interpretation of this panel as an allegory of Prudence still appears precarious, despite the possibility that the drum-playing *putto* may represent Folly. It certainly does not fully do justice to all the imagery of the painting, and, indeed, leaves certain crucial details unexplained. The loose-haired nude, for example, is in complete contrast to Giotto's austere matron who sits authoritatively at her desk; and the playing child is an unusual treatment of the personification of Folly, quite different from the deranged figure of the Fool found in medieval and northern art. In addition, the two *putti* with trumpets are completely unaccounted for. It is advisable, therefore, to seek alternative plausible explanations for the imagery of Bellini's panel before accepting it as an allegory of Prudence.

Considering Bellini's nude figure first: she is portrayed with long, flowing hair and might, understandably, be taken for *Luxuria*, the Christianised equivalent of Venus. This would certainly conform with the identification of the woman in the print by Master E.S.. Earlier, medieval portrayals, however, show the vice *Luxuria* depicted in a variety of different ways with no consistency: sometimes as a woman whose breasts and abdomen are eaten by serpents or toads (reflecting the belief that sinners will be punished through the organs of their lust);⁵⁹ sometimes as an embracing couple, as in the sculptural programmes of Chartres and Amiens cathedrals;⁶⁰ and sometimes as a woman holding chains, as found in most versions of the *Somme le roi* of Lorens d' Orleans (an influential, late-thirteenth-century book of the Virtues and Vices). However, in at least one existing manuscript of the *Somme le Roi Luxuria* is portrayed as a woman with a mirror (Fig. 56).⁶¹ This type is also evidenced in a manuscript illustration of the Testament attributed to Jean de Meung, now in the British Library,⁶² as well as in the stained glass windows of the French cathedrals of Notre Dame and Auxerre.⁶² The diversity of attributes signifying Lust leads to the conclusion that, up to the end of the thirteenth century, there was a wide artistic choice of motifs in use, with no universally recognisable visual representation. Identification was only assured by reference to the context and by accompanying inscriptions.⁶³

In the fourteenth century and later, however, portrayals of a woman with a mirror became associated more definitely with the "voluptuous life",

exemplified in illustrations found in some versions of the *Ovide moralisé* (Fig. 57) and the *Échecs amoureux* (Fig. 58). In the latter, the woman representing the Voluptuous Life is identified by an inscription as "Venus", with "Pallas" and "Juno" shown representing the Active and the Contemplative lives: moralisation of these three pagan goddesses (whom Paris had once been given the task of judging) is thought to derive from Fulgentius's sixth-century *Mythologia*.⁶⁵

Venus is depicted with a mirror in the quite different context of the planetary cycles, where, with a growing interest in astrology in the fourteenth century, planets were often represented by the figures of the pagan gods. In Italy, astrological Venus appeared in both religious and civic settings.⁶⁶ In a fourteenth-century fresco cycle in the Eremitani, Padua, painted by Guariento di Arpo (recorded 1338-70), the planet Venus is represented clothed and dignified, with her mirror in her hand (Fig. 59). Identical in context, but quite different in style, is the naked, loose-haired, astrological Venus-with-mirror depicted in an illustration of the *Liber physiognomiae* from Modena c.1430 (Fig. 60), which closely resembles the nude in Bellini's panel painting.⁶⁷

Bellini may or may not have been familiar with some of these Venus figures, but he was undoubtedly aware of a local and readily accessible sculptural example. A zodiacal image of Venus was carved on the capitol of the thirteenth column of the lower Arcade of the Doge's palace in Venice (Fig. 61), close to the carving of *Luxuria* already mentioned as a possible source of

imagery for Bonifazio's painting of Lot's second daughter.⁶⁸ Venus is shown with symbols of her houses, Taurus and Libra: she is portrayed sitting upon a bull with a set of scales in her left hand. She carries a mirror in her right hand and, in Ruskin's words: "Her breast is very nobly and tenderly indicated under the folds of her drapery."⁶⁹ Unlike the woman in Bellini's panel painting, the carved figures representing both Venus and *Luxuria* in these local examples are clothed and seated figures, rather than standing nudes. Nevertheless, in each case the viewer's attention is deliberately drawn to their breasts: in the case of Venus, by the transparency of her clothing, and, in the case of *Luxuria*, by the action of the woman in pulling down her dress, as described by Ruskin.

In addition to the carvings of *Venus* and *Luxuria*, there is another sculptural image in the Doge's Palace architecture that appears to have been a more direct visual source for Bellini's nude: the naked image of Eve (Fig. 62) which forms part of the capital of the corner pillar between the Piazza side and the waterfront side. Like Bellini's nude on a pedestal, the figure of Eve is shown standing with her left arm across her naked body, pointing towards her right hand. Whereas Bellini's nude is painted holding a mirror, Eve, of course, holds an apple; and possibly both were intended to depict a temptress.

Whilst various analogous examples provide strong visual evidence that the nude in Bellini's panel was intended to represent the vice *Luxuria* as a moral allegory of Venus, the significance of the *putti* needs further clarification. The previous discussion of the child playing a drum indicates

that he may be an innovative representation of Folly. However, drum-playing *putti* are common in sixteenth-century prints of children's games; and some of these have already been shown to convey a surreptitious message of sexual activity. Such prints bring to mind the noise-making figure of Jocus, described by Prudentius in the *Psychomachia* as a member of *Luxuria*'s entourage, carrying "weapons" which "wound with noise".⁷⁰ If Bellini was following Prudentius's example, he might have chosen to represent *Luxuria* with similar companions who made noise. This would account not only for the drum-beating of the foreground child, but also for the trumpets of the other two *putti*: it has been shown that some manuscript illustrations of Jocus in the *Psychomachia* depict various musical instruments surrounding him and his associates, including wind instruments, even though these are not mentioned in the text (Fig. 15). Thus, in Bellini's painting, the *putti* may be intended to reinforce the identity of the nude woman as *Luxuria* by giving her a noisy entourage, of which the foreground *putto* could well be Jocus.

Nevertheless, despite compelling visual evidence supplied by the painting itself, and supported by manuscript illustrations, sculptural images, and northern European prints, an interpretation of Bellini's painting solely as an allegory of *Luxuria* is still not wholly satisfactory. Certain elements suggest that the painting should further be understood as an allegory of Fame: the nude figure is elevated on a pedestal against which lean the two *putti* who carry trumpets, attributes which were consistently associated with personifications of

Fame, (although it must be said that these *putti* are not sounding their trumpets and, indeed, seem rather uninterested in the figure raised above them.) The third *putto*, painted beating his drum as if sounding out his own importance, wears a laurel wreath on his head; a symbol of victory. What, then, is being lauded? Apparently, it is the woman on the pedestal, herself.

Despite the visual references to a triumph of Bellini's Venus-like nude, there are elements of the painting that simultaneously signal a cautionary note. The pedestal is decorated with a gruesome-looking bucranium, a reference to classical funerary decorative-relief sculpture; in addition, the image in the mirror is demonic and evil-looking, perhaps reflecting the folly of reliance on transient, worldly values such as Beauty, Desire and Fame (in Biblical words: "Vanity of vanities . . . all is vanity" [Eccl. 12, 8]).

The varied and competing interpretations tested here challenge the simple explanation that Bellini's panel painting should be entitled Allegory of Prudence. Originally suggested by Ludwig, this interpretation fails to address all aspects of the imagery and therefore remains an unconvincing title. Challenging it, Edgar Wind has summarily suggested in a footnote that the panel represents an allegory of *Vana Gloria*, in particular the ill-fame of woman.⁷¹ In light of the above analysis of the various visual elements, Wind's interpretation seems to be very plausible. It encompasses the identification of

the nude with her mirror as *Luxuria*, whilst simultaneously taking account of the the Fame suggested by the attributes of the *putti* and the elevation of the nude on a pedestal. At the same time, it accounts for those parts of the painting that appear to caution the viewer against the folly of having faith in transient values: the mirror acts as a *speculum stultorum*, and the bucranium as a *memento mori*. The enigmatic nature of the panel appears to be deliberate, serving an intentional dual purpose; on the one hand glorifying sensuality and beauty, whilst on the other cautioning against folly and lust. In its own time, this would have been an appropriate use of imagery for a painting intended to decorate a real mirror. Bellini's painting is, thus, highly indicative of how rich and varied, albeit perplexing at times, secular iconography was during this period.

SUMMARY OF PART THREE

The evidence accumulated in this section, strongly suggests that the playing *putto* was used in art to convey erotic messages. Alchemical sources indicate that *ludus puerorum* 'children's games' was understood in the Renaissance period to be synonymous with coitus/conjunction, and an examination of various prints of playing *putti*, all of which appear to carry sensual messages, gives support to this theory. The analysis of selected paintings by Bonifazio de' Pitati and Giovanni Bellini, and drawings after Michelangelo, show that the playing *putti* depicted in these works of art were probably intended to carry a similar meaning.

In each case, the playing *putto* was depicted as part of an allegory of *Luxuria*, the Christianised moral equivalent of Venus. In Bonifazio's painting of Lot and his Daughters, in the drawings after Michelangelo, and in Bellini's panel, the woman with a mirror is the principal element of the allegory. This follows substantial precedent: in medieval illuminated manuscript illustrations; in French cathedral sculpture and stained glass windows; and in popular Northern European prints of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. For both Bonifazio and Bellini there were also three local sculptural examples at the Doge's Palace in Venice.

The contention that the woman with a mirror as her single attribute represents Prudence is not well-supported by visual parallels. Various fifteenth and sixteenth century Italian paintings of Prudence do show her with a mirror, but also, invariably, with the traditional serpent, and frequently *bifrons*. Further, although the attribute of a drum, used in Bellini's painting, may indeed signal folly, there is no visual evidence from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to support the contention that a playing *putto* was recognised as a personification of the vice Folly who traditionally opposed Prudence.

Despite the conclusions being drawn here, a woman holding a mirror must, nevertheless, have simultaneously evoked various levels of understanding, bringing to the mind of the erudite Renaissance viewer not only *Luxuria*, but also *Prudentia*. Similarly, the playing *putto* with its childish pranks could remind the viewer not only of Jocus, personification of play (and euphemism for coitus) from *Luxuria*'s entourage; but also of childish, naïve folly. Considering the sixteenth-century penchant for the pun and *double entendre*, deliberate ambiguity cannot be entirely ruled out, particularly since warnings of folly and suggestions of prudence add a moral dimension to otherwise titillating and sexually provocative subject matter. These selected works of art provide evidence suggestive of such intentions.

The accumulated circumstantial evidence presented here indicates that the dominant playing *putto* in the paintings by Bonifazio de' Pitati and Giovanni Bellini, and the drawings after Michelangelo, was, in each case, an

attribute of *Luxuria*, depicted as part of her entourage. Hence, each of these *putti* relates, in part, to both classical and medieval descriptions of Jocus, the figure that is the focus of this study. Nevertheless, although the investigations in this section serve to expand our understanding of the significance of playing *putti* in Renaissance art, none of the *putti* depicted her can be specifically identified as Jocus.

A playing *putto* that can be named as Jocus with much greater confidence appears in a group of Tuscan paintings of the mid-sixteenth century. These appear to be the earliest extant portrayals of this personification in fine art (as opposed to book illustration). Interestingly, each of the artists who painted them worked in Florence, and their utilisation of the figure of Jocus in their paintings is the focus of what now follows.

FOUR

**VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF JOCUS
IN THE WORK OF
SIXTEENTH CENTURY TUSCAN ARTISTS**

CHAPTER IV:1

JOCUS IN THE WORK OF GIORGIO VASARI

Four Tuscan painters include in their repertoire of imagery a *putto* clearly identifiable as the personification of Jocus: they are Andrea Picinelli (active 1506-1524) with his brother Raffaello (active 1506-1545), Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574), and Agnolo Bronzino (1503-1572). All of them have painted Jocus as the companion of Venus and Cupid. In order to determine the full nature of the role of Jocus in the *oeuvre* of the artists, the content of each of these paintings is carefully analysed. In addition, relevant interactions between the artists and their patrons are, where possible, noted, in order to establish whether the artists had a mutual source of interest in the motif.

The first of the artists to be considered is Giorgio Vasari. Although he is not the earliest of the group to have included the figure of Jocus in his work, he has the distinction of being the only one who clearly documents the figure, calling him *il Giuoco* in the records of his own work. Therefore, despite the logic of a chronological approach, the investigation has greater clarity if Vasari is considered first.

Vasari registered in his *Ricordanze*, on the last day of August 1541, that he had completed a painting for his patron, Ottaviano de' Medici:

Ricordo come a di ultimo dagosto 1541 il Magnifico Messer Ottaviano de' Medici m'fecje fare un quadro grande di braccia dua emezzo alto et braccia dua largo drentovj un San Jeronimo in penitentia che tenendo il Crocifisso in mano si percuote il petto: et ment[r]e Venere abbracciando i suoi amorj si fuggie et il gi[u]oco lo stragina per un braccio et cupito gli tira le frecce sen[d]o cascati gli arnesi amorosi loratione romper ogni cosa venerea quale si lavorò con diligentia montò detto quadro scudi cinquanta cioe.¹

Here, Vasari is describing a painting of St Jerome in penitence, holding a crucifix in his hand and beating his breast; Venus flees from the scene clasping Amor and dragging Jocus by an arm, whilst Cupid shoots arrows at the saint; and the "implements of love" lie broken where they have fallen to the ground. Given this description, it is generally accepted that he was recording the completion of his painting *St Jerome in Penitence*, now located in the Palatine Gallery of the Pitti Palace in Florence (Fig. 63).² Vasari describes the same painting more fully in his autobiography, indicating his intended meaning and also adding some further descriptive details:

... ed in un gran quadro un S.Girolamo, quanto il vivo, in penitenza, il quale, contemplando la morte di Cristo che ha dinanzi in sulla croce, si percuote il petto per scacciare della mente le cose di Venere e le tentazione della carne che alcuna volta il molestavano, ancorché fusse nei boschi e luoghi solinghi e salvatichi, secondo che egli stesso di sé largamente racconta. Per lo che dimostrare, feci una Venere che con Amore in braccio fugge da quella contemplazione, avendo per mano il Giuoco ed essendogli cascade per terra le frecce ed il turcasso, senza che le saette, da Cupido tirate verso quel santo, tornano rotte verso di lui, ed alcune che cascano gli sono riportate col becco dalle colombe di essa Venere.³

This time, he explains more clearly that St Jerome is beating his breast to drive matters of Venus and the temptations of the flesh out of his mind, as, he says, the saint, himself, had related. In addition, Vasari amplifies his description of the painting: he says that the arrows which Cupid shoots towards the saint return broken, while others that are falling are taken back to Venus in the beaks of her doves. These additional details do not wholly conform to the imagery of the picture; but then, this description was published in 1568, twenty-seven years after the painting was executed. Vasari may have been inaccurate in his description because of a faulty memory so many years after the completion of the painting; on the other hand, his descriptions sometimes tended to elaborate on visual details, both of his own work and that of other artists. Nevertheless, the expanded account does serve to confirm that Vasari had been using the saint's own account of his penitence to inform the devising of the imagery.

St Jerome's explanation of his temptations in the wilderness, which was the basis of all the traditional artistic imagery of the subject, is found in a letter written to his disciple, a young matron called Eustochium:

How often when I was living in the desert, in the vast solitude . . . did I fancy myself among the pleasures of Rome! I used to sit alone because I was filled with bitterness . . . the fires of lust kept bubbling up before me when my flesh was as good as dead. Helpless I cast myself at the feet of Jesus . . . I remember how often I cried aloud all night till break of day and ceased not from beating my breast till tranquility returned at the chiding of the Lord.⁴

Paintings of this episode in St Jerome's life almost invariably portray the saint alone in the wilderness praying to a crucifix; but the nature of the temptations which tormented him, and for which he was penitent, are usually neither painted nor alluded to.⁵

Vasari's interpretation is unique in sixteenth-century art, although his portrayal of St Jerome himself is consistent with many other versions. His Penitence, a large oil painting on panel (165 x 123 centimetres), shows the saint at the right-hand side, an elderly man, bearded and bare-chested; he is shown kneeling before a crucifix and beating his breast with a stone. On a rock beneath the crucifix stand some books and a skull, whilst on the ground in front lies the lion traditionally associated with Jerome.⁶ These are all the conventional attributes of the penitent saint: the crucifix representing his appeal to Christ for strength to resist temptation; the skull, a symbol of his meditation and a *memento mori*; and the books signifying both his studies and his translation of the Bible into Latin.

Vasari then proceeded to depart from known precedent by depicting, allegorically, the lascivious thoughts which tempted the saint during his sojourn

in the desert. He provides this comprehensive artistic translation of St Jerome's written account by including an allegorical group figures on the left of the painting, forming a second major focus of the work. He, himself, has identified the figures that compose this group as Venus, Amor and Jocus, and arranged them as a closely-knit triad: Venus clutches Amor to her shoulder and guides Jocus by holding his arm. They are portrayed as if beginning to depart from the scene, behind the back of the praying saint. Blind Cupid and the doves of Venus are shown flying overhead, visually linking the triad with St Jerome in an inverted triangular composition.

Of greatest interest for this study is the figure identified as *il Giuoco* in both the *Ricordanze* and in the *Vite*. The vocabulary that Vasari uses in his *Ricordanze*, stating: "*il Gi[u]oco lo stragina per un braccio*", implies that this putto, at least, is to be interpreted as being urged to leave against his will. This is reinforced visually not only by Venus pulling his arm, but by the rueful glance that the *putto* casts back at the praying saint; he is painted as a recalcitrant child, resisting the urges of his mother, and holding onto his attributes.

The attributes that Vasari has chosen for Jocus are particularly informative to the viewer. Firstly, they indicate the role played by the figure in the painting; and, secondly, they reflect the literary and visual precedents from which Vasari may well have derived his imagery. Jocus is depicted carrying two playthings: in

his right hand, despite his wrist being tightly held by Venus, he holds an elaborate rattle; and in his left hand holds a carved stick that he is using as a hobbyhorse.

Considering the rattle first: this toy resembles a percussion instrument. It appears to be a kind of timbrel, circular and interspersed with clappers; but, unusually, it is mounted on a long, carved handle. Since such a device would make its rattling sound by being shaken, it is in keeping with the "*sistrum*" attributed to Jocus in Prudentius' *Psychomachia*.⁷ In that context, at the defeat of his leader, *Luxuria*, the fleeing Jocus drops his noisy "weapons" (the *sistrum* and the cymbals) in defeat. It has already been noted that the visual form of these noise-making devices varied considerably in the manuscript illustrations of the medieval period; and that the *sistrum*, in particular, was an object whose form was unfamiliar to the medieval artists who illustrated Prudentius' text. If Vasari intended this rattle to refer to the *sistrum*, in Prudentius' *Psychomachia* it is not surprising that it has a new and interesting shape.

In terms of Renaissance playthings, or even musical instruments, this rattle is unusual in form. There is a certain similarity with short-handled children's rattles, that were often hung with bells (Fig. 64); but the only related device with such a long handle that has come to light is the Turkish *chaghána* (Fig. 65), used in predominantly percussion Janissary-music, and known in Italy as *banda turca*. Although these instruments vary considerably in form and complexity, surviving ones consist of a wooden staff surmounted by a conical ornament from which hang a combination of bells and clappers.⁸ One could speculate that this

instrument of the "infidel", that probably first appeared in Italy during the sixteenth century, was understood to be a kind of sistrum.⁹ Certainly both the sistrum and the *chagána* were rattles used in non-Christian ceremonies, thereby, to the Christian mind, doubtless having associations with vice. By placing a rattle in the hand of Jocus, Vasari presents evidence that the *literati* advising him may have been using Prudentius' description of this figure; and also, perhaps, that they understood Jocus to have been used by Prudentius "against the virtues" as explained in the marginal glosses of many of the manuscripts of the *Psychomachia*.¹⁰

The stick which Vasari painted in Jocus' other hand has quite different connotations, and has no association with Prudentius' text. It has a curved top which finishes as a carved human head, and it is being ridden by Jocus as a hobbyhorse. Various visual precedents exist for a similar stick in the hands of a *putto*: in classical Roman art, many *putti* carry a *pedum* or crook (Fig. 3); and sixteenth-century images of *le giuchi di putti* often include children with hobbyhorses, or playing with crooks in some other way (Figs. 36, 37 and 66).¹¹

However, the carved human head that Vasari has added to this attribute of Jocus, gives it a new dimension: it resembles the *marotte* or foolstick of the court jester, used to arouse laughter by being the mute partner in a foolish conversation. The *marotte*, at first merely a club, came to be carved with a face that resembled that of the fool who carried it.¹² In Vasari's painting, however, the head carved at the end of Jocus' stick has a dour and bearded face. Instead of the face of the

putto who carries it, it bears a striking resemblance to that of St Jerome, a resemblance that is reinforced by the direction in which the face is turned: as if directly looking back towards the saint.

Vasari's Jocus, then, is portrayed riding a hobbyhorse that is in the guise of a foolstick. Despite being an attribute of play and childhood, this stick may be expected to allude to folly; in this case, no doubt, to the folly of the saint's "*tentazione della carne*". In the hand of Jocus it signals that this *putto* being used by Vasari as both a sexual attribute of Venus, representing the "temptations of the flesh", as well as a personification of human folly. This interpretation of his role suggests that Vasari's literary advisors may have been familiar with another source which has already been discussed, namely, the *Ovide Moralisé*, in which Jocus is described as evoking the folly which deprives lovers of their ability to act rationally; yet one would not normally anticipate that this French moralisation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was a likely resource; however, it is difficult to assess the accessibility of copies in Vasari's milieu.¹³

Vasari's representation of Jocus, then, is particularly reminiscent of two of the literary sources examined above: Prudentius' *Psychomachia* and the anonymous *Ovide Moralisé*. In both of these narratives, Jocus has a companion vice, namely, Cupid/Amor the god of Love; and Vasari includes this companion, too, in his painting of the *Penitence*. He placed Amor high on the chest of Venus, leaning against her shoulder. The attributes of this *putto*, which are scattered on

the ground beneath him, are the traditional "implements" of the god of Love: the arrows, the quiver and the lighted torch.

By using the device of discarded weapons, Vasari again appears to follow the text of Prudentius's *Psychomachia*: there, when the Virtues have overcome the Vices, the defeated Amor flees following the death of his leader, *Luxuria*, dropping his bow, arrows and quiver.¹⁴ The use of fallen weapons, however, was a well-established (indeed, commonplace) literary and pictorial method of signalling defeat and does not, in itself, imply that the image was directly derived from the *Psychomachia*. The combination of fallen weapons with flight from an adversary who represents spiritual virtue, an image which both Vasari's painting and Prudentius's text utilise, was also an established artistic device; as was the *psychomachia* motif in general (for example, in Perugino's *Combat of Ratio and Libido*). It is the combination of the visually rare figure of Jocus as a companion of Cupid, combined with these *psychomachia* elements, that make a compelling case for Prudentius's text having to some extent informed Vasari's imagery.

Vasari utilises the flight and the fallen weapons to cleverly imply that St Jerome's prayers are beginning to succeed in thwarting the designs of Amor, when spiritual love overcomes carnal desire. Reinforcing this message, and visually linking Jocus with Amor, is the prominent figure of retreating Venus. The immediate visual effect of the triad of Venus with the two *putti* is of a mother about to retreat with her reluctant children. The concept of Venus as a mother of more than one child is not unusual in classical and Renaissance literature, as the

earlier discussion of literary sources has already indicated.¹⁵ Classical sources of this kind were probably familiar to Vasari, if it is true, as he claimed in his "Life of Salvati", that he was well-versed in Latin literature at an early age.¹⁶ In addition, the *Ovide Moralisé* describes Venus as producing twin sons, namely Cupid and Jocus.¹⁷ A maternal Venus, however, seems to be at variance with the role of seductress which she is ostensibly playing in this narrative. Indeed, since she is not portrayed as a nude figure, it is not immediately obvious that this woman is Venus until her specific attributes are recognised: the rosebuds in her hair, and the pair of doves. Only the device of a bared shoulder, as her dress slips down her arm, hints at her seductive nature.

Interestingly, the triad resembles contemporaneous personifications of *Caritas* which often show a woman carrying one child whilst others play around her.¹⁸ The term *caritas*, however, refers to a different kind of love from that signalled by Venus or Cupid. St Augustine (354-430) defined the virtue *caritas* as both love of God and of one's neighbour: "*Caritas dicitur amor Dei et proximi.*"¹⁹ He differentiated it from *cupiditas*, the love associated with desire and passionate longing, considering them to be mutually exclusive. *Cupiditas*, he said, was the sinful part of the world that can only exist in opposition to *caritas*: "*Nutrimendum caritatis est diminutio cupiditatis; sed ubi est perfectio caritatis, nulla est cupiditas.*"²⁰ In contrast, the mystic St Bernard (1090-1153) conceived desire, to be a necessary pre-form of spiritual love: "*Nunquam erit caritas ... sine cupiditate, ... ordinat cupiditatem.*"²¹ This attitude was common to most

thirteenth-century mystics, and also conforms with Franciscan tradition which held that the two kinds of love are complementary movements towards God.²²

Vasari's painting can, conceivably, be interpreted to reflect either one of these doctrines. On the one hand, Venus and her entourage, representing *cupiditas*, may be fleeing because they cannot coexist with *caritas*, represented by the praying saint, thus reflecting the Augustinian attitude; although this does not account for Venus and her children being painted to noticeably resemble Charity. An alternative explanation is that Vasari and his patron had a Franciscan attitude in mind: the transformation of concupiscent Venus into an image more recognisable as *Caritas* reinforces the visual message that St Jerome's victory over carnal desire is imminent and the way is now open for complete spiritual love. This latter interpretation is the more convincing, and would partially excuse St Jerome's lustful longings as a necessary prerequisite of his love for God, in keeping with the words of St Bernard. Speculatively, it may also imply that Vasari's patron had a sympathetic understanding of St Jerome's plight.

Although Vasari appears to have treated Amor and Jocus as children of Venus, the blindfolded, flying Cupid seems to have a more independent existence, albeit as a supporter of Venus's cause. This third *amoretto* is named Cupid by Vasari, despite the presence of another form of the god of Love in the painting, namely Amor.²³ His presence tends to reinforce the carnal nature of

Jerome's temptation since the blindfold indicates that here Cupid is a personification of Blind Love; the visual references to *caritas* suggest that his efforts are doomed to failure as the saint's prayers drive his temptations away.²⁴ The earliest sources for a personification of Blind Love are literary: in the *Ovide Moralisé*, both Amor and Jocus are described as blind and naked; and Boccaccio's *Genealogia Deorum* (1350) refers to this blindness, and, at one point, not only to blind love but to blindfolded love.²⁵

In terms of art and visual imagery, Cupid had evolved as a nude putto of classical precedent, to which a blindfold could be added to suggest profanity, especially when contrasting earthly love with spiritual love. In the sixteenth century this is evidenced in Alciati's *Emblemata* (1531), the first of a long series of emblem books to be published over succeeding centuries as a guide to image-makers of all kinds including painters. There, numerous examples of blindfolded Cupids are used to illustrate various aspects of profane love. It is reasonable to assume that Vasari, a contemporary of Alciati, would also have used a blindfolded Cupid to suggest *amor vulgaris*.²⁶ Blind Cupid is painted directly attacking St Jerome by firing his arrows towards him; unlike Venus, Amor and Jocus, who are depicted turning to leave the scene.

In the context of a painting depicting St Jerome's penitence, Venus, Amor, Jocus and Blind Cupid have all been included in order to allegorise and

emphasise the carnal nature of the temptations which the saint experienced in the wilderness, and which were responsible for his need for penitence. In Vasari's composition, all attention is focused on St Jerome as he contemplates his crucifix: whilst Blind Cupid aims an arrow at his head and Jocus pulls back, Venus herself casts a glance behind her as she moves away, presenting an elegant Mannerist profile to the viewer. The pose of Venus is suggestive of a last attempt at seduction, as, with a timeless voluptuous gesture, she coyly turns her head down toward her naked shoulder; yet, ambiguously, the motif of a mother with her children around her is reminiscent of *Caritas* imagery. Will the saint's prayers succeed in overcoming his carnal temptation and divert his love toward heaven, as implied by the retreating *Venus-Caritas* and her *putti*, or will he eventually succumb to the continued attack of profane Blind Cupid's arrows? The substance of Vasari's painting signifies that, at this moment, the outcome is held in the balance.

The painting of the Penitence in the Pitti Palace was the first of at least three, virtually-identical copies of this subject that Vasari himself executed: one is in the Graetz Collection at Castello Vincigliata in Florence; another belongs to the City of Leeds Art Gallery at Temple Newsam House. In addition, there is a variant in the Art Institute of Chicago, which is attributed to Vasari on the grounds of its content and compositional similarity to the others.²¹ It is an

unfinished painting called The Temptation of St Jerome (Fig. 69).²⁸ Whilst in many respects very similar to the Pitti painting, it differs substantially in certain key areas. A comparison of these two paintings enables the reconstruction of some possible motives for Vasari's unusual interpretation of St Jerome's penitence.

St Jerome is depicted almost identically in both versions, although in the Chicago Temptation he is painted smaller relative to the picture-plane, as, indeed, are all the figures. The group of Venus with Amor and Jocus is shown more obviously in flight from the saint than in the Penitence; their position on the canvas, drawing away from St Jerome, allows the opening up of a landscape in the centre of the painting which thus becomes an important part of the composition. A deep space is depicted with distant hills on which markedly-antique buildings are sketched. In front of these is a broad sweep of water fed from the spilling vessel of a river god who reclines in the middle distance. The only visual reference to landscape in the Pitti Penitence is a distant mountain with similar antique buildings and a river; the entire landscape is reduced to a glimpse between the foreground details of Venus and the leaves of the tree.

The tree itself differs substantially in the two paintings. In the Penitence it is shown as a dense tangle of healthy leaves, most of it hidden from view by the foreground figures of Blind Cupid and St Jerome. In the Chicago Temptation, however, the tree is devoid of leaves, and appears gnarled; and it hangs with strangely dripping vegetation. It is very unusual to find this kind of tree in Italian

painting: it is, however, common in the work of southern German artists.²⁹ A print of St Jerome (1511) by Hans Baldung Grien (Fig. 70) is compositionally remarkably similar to the Temptation, suggesting that Vasari may have been familiar with this northern work.

The background depicted in the Chicago painting relates to one of Vasari's literary sources: as demonstrated in Part One of this study, the major source of the Venus-Amor-Jocus triad, cited in several sixteenth-century books, is the couplet in Horace's Ode to Augustus: "*Sive tu mavis Erycina ridens / Quam locus circumvolat et Cupido*." Interestingly, although probably only coincidentally, the painted background of the Temptation seems to conform with the scene described by Horace in the body of this poem. The ode begins by explaining how the gods have sent ill-omened weather to Rome; the people are afraid that the age of the flood might return as the avenging River Tiber attacks the monuments of King Numa and the Temple of Vesta, namely, the city of Rome itself.³⁰ The temples on the hillside in the Temptation could have been intended to represent the temples of Rome; and the river god, the Tiber. Further, Horace, in his ode, evokes various gods to whom Rome might turn for relief from disaster (real and symbolic); one of these is Venus Erycina, patron goddess of ancient Rome, with her companions, Cupid and Jocus. Thus, metaphorically, one can seek solace from Love in times of spiritual trouble.

Even if Vasari was not directly illustrating elements of Horace's poem, there is a plausible reason why he might have painted the penitent St Jerome in a

landscape with references to Rome: he cites St Jerome's own words as the source of his imagery; and the letter which the saint wrote to Eustochium states: "How often did I fancy myself among the pleasures of Rome!" thereby confirming that his lustful thoughts were based on his memories of that city. Nevertheless, there are other tenable interpretations of the scene. David Clark cites St Jerome's 'Letter to Heliodorus' as the source of the imagery: there, loss of chastity is compared to a shipwreck such as Ulysses suffered at the whirlpool of Charybdis. Further, Ulysses took refuge under a fig tree whose leaves overshadowed the whirlpool, and in the Penitence St Jerome prays beneath a tree that is undoubtedly intended to be a fig. However, there is no obvious whirlpool in either of Vasari's paintings (indeed, the river god distinctly implies that the water is a river) and Clark does not account for the absence of the fig tree in the Chicago Temptation nor the absence of the shipwreck in the Penitence. In neither painting does all of this symbolic imagery become united. Indeed, the completed Penitence in the Pitti Palace depicts only distant hills with antique buildings by a river in the background. The fig tree is a prominent element of the foreground but lacking the shipwreck and distant water it is difficult to see how the tree alone would have evoked Ulysses plight or Jerome's 'Letter to Heliodorus'³¹

If the background imagery was, indeed, intended to evoke Rome, Vasari could visually tie together a triad of literary cross-references: to Rome (Horace and Jerome); to St Jerome's temptation (the 'Letter to Eustochium'); and to the allegorical figures of Venus, Amor and Jocus that signify the carnal nature of the

saint's temptation (Horace). The "spiritual shipwreck" that suggests imagery from St Jerome's 'Letter to Heliodorus' is, nevertheless, compelling.

A further iconographic detail within the unfinished Temptation is noteworthy: the flying Cupid has no blindfold; but he also has no eyes. Either the blindfold or the eyes were not yet painted in by the artist. A small, hitherto unnoticed item in the painting offers a solution. Lying on the ground near to the foot of St Jerome, and directly beneath the flying Cupid, is a white object which has not yet been identified. It clearly resembles the bandages used to bind the eyes of the Cupids in Alciati's *Emblemata* (Fig. 71). It is highly probable that it was intended to represent the discarded blindfold of a previously blind Cupid. If the artist had painted in the eyes, he would have depicted a clear-sighted Cupid signifying to the erudite Renaissance viewer a now-enlightened Divine Love.

Despite addressing all of these elements, the Chicago Temptation was abandoned unfinished and a more simplified composition taken to completion; namely, the Pitti version. Perhaps the Temptation had too many complex and scattered allusions, which not only confused the meaning but also detracted from the unity of the composition. The completed Penitence in the Pitti Palace, with its tighter composition and monumental figures (emulating the art of Vasari's great hero, Michelangelo) focuses attention on the human element. In particular, it depicts the inner conflict of St Jerome at the height of his struggle with his

temptations, the moment of greatest tension in the narrative, when the outcome is as yet unresolved.

In contrast, the Chicago variant shows Venus and her entourage already clearly in flight, and Cupid un-blinded, an anticlimactic moment in the narrative, suggesting that the saint's prayers had already taken effect. The drama of the narrative is over: not only does Venus remove the troublesome personifications of lust and folly, but blindfolded Profane Love has been converted to clearsighted Divine Love. There is more movement but less dramatic tension in this composition. In contrast, the completed Penitence, with its human emphasis, greater unity of composition, and focus on the climactic struggle of forces, has resolved some of the potential weaknesses in the unfinished Temptation.

The comparison between the Temptation in Chicago, which is attributed to Vasari, and the Penitence in the Pitti Palace, which is assuredly by him, leads to the conclusion that the Chicago version was an initial attempt by Vasari to fulfil the commission of Ottaviano de' Medici. Considering the use of various *all'antica* motifs in the composition, drapery and figures, added to the background Roman landscape, the painting was probably conceived during Vasari's stay in Rome in 1538. This was after he had spent three days with Ottaviano in Florence, when he may well have received the commission.³²

In view of the fact that Vasari had previously exiled himself from Florence for four years, and only returned at the bidding of Ottaviano, it is reasonable to

assume that the painting was intended to reassert Vasari's allegiance to his past patron, as well as to demonstrate his erudition. In the same way, as Vasari states in his autobiography, his painting of the Allegory of the Immaculate Conception (1540) for Bindo Altoviti was intended to reintroduce him to Florence as a great painter.³³ By the time Vasari returned permanently to Florence in 1540, his style had matured and he is considered to have lost much of his former naïvety.³⁴ Perhaps, after consultation with his patron, he decided to rework his initial painting of St Jerome's temptation, still using the essential sources of his imagery, which must have proven acceptable to Ottaviano.

There is a further interesting parallel between Horace's ode and Vasari's penitent St Jerome: the ode was dedicated to Horace's emperor, Octavian Augustus, as a political poem and the means by which Horace chose to announce his allegiance and enthusiasm for Octavian.³⁵ How apt that Vasari, too, was reasserting his own allegiance to his own Octavian, Ottaviano de' Medici, with this painting. It is useful next to consider Vasari's patron and his relationship with the painter.

Ottaviano de' Medici (1482-1546) belonged to the main, fifteenth-century branch of the Medici family, but was also related by marriage to the secondary branch. His wife was Francesca Salviati, daughter of Jacopo Salviati and Lucrezia de' Medici (the family tree is shown in Fig. 72). Ottaviano had an

understated but important cultural and political role in Florence before the restoration of the Medici in 1512: his father had been a confidant of Lorenzo the Magnificent; and he, himself, became curator of the inheritance of Alfonsina de' Medici after the death of Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino; thereafter, Ottaviano controlled the depository of Alessandro and of Cosimo de' Medici. He was entrusted to attend to political matters, especially after the seige of 1529-30, and probably influenced both the political and artistic choices of Alessandro; and, later, those of the young Cosimo, as his personal advisor.³⁶

Ottaviano's interest in art is evident in his role as collector, patron and supervisor of a variety of Medici commissions. The most important of the portraits of the family in the first decades of the sixteenth century were in his possession, several having been painted at his own commission.³⁷ He also supervised the decoration of the Villa Medici at Poggio a Caiano, acting as curator and administrator of the project. The *Ricordanze* of Vasari attest to the many works Vasari, himself, executed for Ottaviano between 1533 and 1541. The *Penitence* was the last work that Vasari records as being for him, although Ottaviano did not die until 1546, five years later. Before he died, however, he was responsible for organising many of the artistic commissions of the young Duke Cosimo de' Medici and thus would have continued to play an important role in Vasari's career.

Giorgio Vasari left an extensive account of his own life in the form of an autobiography in his most well-known work, the *Vite*; in his *Ricordanze*; the

Ragionamenti; the *Zibaldone*; and in numerous letters.³⁸ From these it is possible to establish a summary of his life, provided one makes allowance for the rhetorical exaggeration and the self-aggrandizement which pervades Vasari's writing. He was born at Arezzo in Tuscany in 1511 and hence was known to his contemporaries as Giorgio d'Arezzo. He allegedly began his education in both art and literature at an early age: he claimed that by the age of nine his knowledge of Latin and his artistic abilities had so impressed his kinsman Silvio Passerini, Cardinal of Cortona and tutor-governor of the two young Medici, Alessandro (1511-1537) and Ippolito (1511-1535), that he was taken to Florence to be educated with them. There Vasari pursued his literary education under Pierio Valeriano (1477-1560), writer of the renowned *Hieroglyphica*.

In his *Life of Salviati*, Vasari relates that in 1527 (at the age of sixteen) he joined his friends Nannoccio de San Giorgio and Francesco Rosso (later called "Salviati" after his major patron, Cardinal Giovanni Salviati) in Florence, where he claims they worked for two years with "incredible zeal", driven by the desire to learn, all three putting themselves under the protection of the workshop of the painter Raffaello Brescianino: " . . . *che tornò a Fiorenza, dove con incredibile studio, per i spazio di due anni, cacciati dal bisogno e dal desiderio d'imparare, fecero acquisto maraviglioso, riparandosi insieme col detto Nannoccio da San Giorgio tutti i tre in bottega di Raffaello del Brescia pittor.*"³⁹ If accurately reported, this was Vasari's longest consistent apprenticeship.⁴⁰

He first worked for Ottaviano de' Medici in 1534; and after various travels and a stay in Rome, he returned to Florence in 1540 at the age of twenty-nine, hoping to establish his reputation as an artist there with his painting of The Immaculate Conception: he claims to have devised the complex iconography himself, together with "the opinion of many mutual friends, men of letters and others," an indication that he valued imagery with complex meanings and sought the opinions of *litterati* in order to achieve it.⁴¹

Whilst Vasari was working on the Immaculate Conception, he recorded that he was also copying two works by Michelangelo for Ottaviano de' Medici: Leda and the Swan and Venus with Cupid, two reclining, erotic nudes known to us today only from contemporaneous copies (Figs. 73 and 74).⁴² During the same period, Vasari was painting the St Jerome in Penitence which, because of the inclusion of Jocus, is the focus of our attention here. The eroticism of the other two painted subjects chosen by Ottaviano at that time, namely, the Leda and the Venus and Cupid, leads to speculation about Ottaviano's motives in choosing this particular range of subjects. Could it be that he, like St Jerome, may have been struggling with his own lascivious thoughts, thus causing him to strongly identify with the saint's predicament?

The penitence of St Jerome became a popular subject for painting in sixteenth-century Italy.⁴³ During this period, there was growing development of "erotic spirituality", especially among lay confraternities that claimed St Jerome as their patron saint, one of which, the *Compagnia della Divino Amore* at the

church of *San Girolamo della Carità* in Rome, enjoyed extensive patronage by the Medici popes.⁴⁴ Perhaps Vasari's patron, Ottaviano, was a member of such a confraternity. The possibility, though speculative, would account not only for his choice of the Penitence but also for Vasari's unique allegorical interpretation of the saint's sexual temptation, of which Jocus is a fundamental part.

To sum up, the inclusion of Jocus in this painting, the choice of his attributes, and the manner in which he is depicted in the entourage of Venus, suggests that Vasari was familiar with the imagery of this personification as described in both Prudentius' *Psychomachia* and Horace's *Ode to Augustus*. It is also possible that, in iconographically associating Jocus with folly, he was also aware of the description of Jocus in the *Ovide Moralisé*. In depicting Jocus as a playing *putto*, however, Vasari cannot have been using the medieval illustrations of Prudentius' *Psychomachia* as his source of imagery, even though these are the only securely-identified visual precedents of Jocus. Instead, he seems to have used another visual source: a very similar playing *putto* was painted approximately fifteen years earlier in two separate works. Both are attributed to Andrea del Brescianino, brother of Raffaello del Brescianino in whose studio Vasari had previously worked. Consequently, the Brescianini brothers and their two paintings are the subjects of the next logical stage in this investigation of Jocus.

CHAPTER IV:2

JOCUS IN TWO PAINTINGS BY THE BRESCIANINI

Two paintings of similar style, probably executed in the 1520s, depict Venus with Amor and a second *putto* who can be identified as Jocus. The paintings are entitled Venus and Cupids (Fig. 76) and Venus with Two Amorini (Fig. 77). A stylistic analysis suggests that both paintings are attributable to the same artist, Andrea del Brescianino, probably together with his brother Raffaello.⁴⁵ Unlike the case of Vasari, there is only a limited amount of available documentary evidence about these two artists and their work; but, nevertheless, it is useful to establish what is known of their background before analysing each of the paintings in detail.

The earliest printed account of the Brescianini, in *Le Pompe Sanesi* (1649) by Isodoro Ugurgieri, informs that Andrea di Giovanni di Tommaso Piccinelli, known as *il Brescianino*, and his brother Raffaello, were the sons of a dancing teacher from Brescia who lived in Siena from about 1505.⁴⁶ Documents confirm that both brothers were already active painters in Siena in 1506, and that they continued working there until 1524, when together they painted a Baptism of Christ for the high altar of the parish church of San Giovanni.⁴⁷ After this, they left Siena and went to work in Florence, where Andrea is recorded in the book of the *Compagnia de' Pittori di Firenze* for the

year 1525.⁴⁸ Vasari reports that Raffaello had a workshop in Florence by 1527, where both he, Vasari, and his friend, Salviati, worked for two years around 1527-29. It has been assumed that Andrea died in c.1525, since no further documented reference to him has come to light; but Raffaello lived until 15 February 1545, when his burial in Sant' Ambrogio, Florence, is recorded.

Only one documented painting by the brothers survives today, the altarpiece of The Baptism of Christ, now in the *Museo dell' Opera del Duomo* in Siena: it was painted by both brothers and was already in position in the cathedral in 1524; and it is reported to have been praised by Dominico Beccafumi and by Giovanni di Bartolomeo.⁴⁹ Ugurgieri attributes two further works to the Brescianini brothers conjointly, Madonna and Child with Saints and The Coronation of the Virgin, both of which are still in Siena.⁵⁰ It is solely on stylistic comparison with these three paintings that attributions of other works are based. Oddly enough, modern scholars have chosen to attribute them all to Andrea and to totally disregard Raffaello, despite the existing documentary and historical evidence that the brothers usually worked collaboratively, and despite the possibility that Raffaello lived for twenty years after the presumed death of his brother Andrea.⁵¹ It is safer, perhaps, to assume that most of the works attributed to Andrea alone should be assigned to both Brescianini brothers.

Both the paintings that are pertinent to this discussion, namely Venus and Cupids and Venus with Two Amorini (Figs. 76 and 77), portray a nude Venus accompanied by two *putti*. As their titles suggest, there has been no previous attempt specifically to identify the individual *putti*. In each case, one carries attributes that clearly identify him as the god of love, Cupid/Amor; the other carries a kind of rattle in the form of a hoop of bells suspended from a staff. This attribute closely resembles that held by Vasari's figure of Jocus in the Penitence, examined in the previous chapter. Since this *putto* also forms a triad with Venus and Amor he can, by analogy, confidently be identified as Jocus. The estimated date of Venus with Two Amorini is the 1520s, some fifteen or twenty years before Vasari executed his Penitence. Vasari was studying in Raffaello Brescianino's workshop in the late 1520s; thus, in view of his having used the same motif himself, it is reasonable to suppose that he may have seen, or even worked on, at least one of the Brescianini paintings in question, and that his idea of using the Venus-Amor-Jocus triad partially derived from his familiarity with this source.

The two paintings attributed to the Brescianini are the earliest ones encountered that depict the Horatian triad. In order to account for this apparent innovation in Tuscan painting during the sixteenth century, it is, therefore, necessary to analyse the two paintings in detail and to assess the significance of their imagery. Despite the inclusion of the same triad of figures, each of the paintings derives from a different compositional tradition, each of which has

interesting implications in terms of understanding the motif. An analysis of some compositional precedents is thus helpful in amplifying the nature of the roles played by the figures; in particular, the specific necessity for including the *putto* who is identifiable as Jocus.

i. Venus and Cupids

The painting called Venus and Cupids is, at present, in the private collection of Dr Albert Brimo in Paris. It was inaccurately designated "School of Fontainebleau, sixteenth century" in the Wildenstein Exhibition of 1939, at which time it was part of the private collection of Martin Le Roy. Beyond this, nothing is known of its provenance before the twentieth century. When advertised for sale in 1958, it was described thus:

Venus reclines in the position settled for her by Giorgione, whilst blind Cupid clammers over her as though about to whisper some secret in her ear. Another Cupid points at her, and two heraldic doves, reflecting one another like a pattern on a textile, perch on a branch of the tree.³²

The work, however, merits a more detailed description than this; and a further iconographical analysis leads to a better understanding of the meaning of the painting and the intentions of the artist.

The nude female figure is portrayed in the painting reclining in a landscape setting which shows a distant hillside town; she rests her weight on her right elbow as she lies back against a red cloth; and her hand is shown

brushing the side of her hair as she appears to look out towards the viewer. She is identifiable as Venus by the intimate proximity of Cupid/Amor, with his quiver of arrows, and by the pair of white doves that are one of her attributes. (According to classical literary sources, as reiterated by Late Medieval and Renaissance authors from Albricus to Cartari, the doves were consecrated to Venus because of their frequent and fervid coitus.)⁵³ Amor, blindfolded to signify profane love, is sensually depicted with his thighs and genitalia touching Venus' thigh and hip, whilst his small hand is shown sinking into her soft flesh.⁵⁴ He has his quiver of arrows slung over his shoulder and his wings are tipped with a bright red colouring, the same as the fabric on which Venus lies.

As if to draw attention to the sensuality of the scene, Jocus, shown standing at the feet of Venus, points back at the other two figures, thus linking his role with theirs. He has been placed close to the doves of Venus that represent sexual passion, and is, thus, visually associated with such passion. These various clues signal to the viewer that the scene has deliberate erotic overtones. A brief survey of the reclining nude in Tuscan art reveals that the motif, itself, was initially associated specifically with nuptials, confirming the sexual intentions of the painting, and, by association, the role of Jocus.

The popularity of the reclining female nude is first evidenced on the interior panels underneath the lids of a number of surviving Tuscan marriage chests or *cassoni*.⁵⁵ Some of these survive in pairs which show that one lid

portrayed, or allegorised, the potential husband whilst the other portrayed, or allegorised, the young wife-to-be. In most cases the male figure is clothed, but the female is nude. One such pair, shown in Fig. 78, was produced in the second half of the fifteenth century, and exemplifies the tradition.⁵⁶

Similar images of reclining couples were produced at about the same time in a group of Florentine decorative prints known as "Otto prints".⁵⁷ One of these shows a young couple in the centre, dancing in a landscape beneath a radiant sun (Fig. 79), surrounded by *putti* playing musical instruments, mostly of the percussion type. At the base of the roundel, a man and woman lie beside one another; the female is nude and the male clothed; the woman is holding the young man's arm as he touches her cheek with a carnation, the flower that symbolised marriage. The reclining posture of both figures, with legs crossed and the figure leaning on one elbow, is identical with that employed on many *cassoni* panels.

Another Otto print is more explicit in its sexual message (Fig. 80): whilst the centre roundel contains two blank panels intended for personalised inscriptions, the surrounding band is full of scenes of amorous activity and symbolic meaning. Four roundels are set, one in each quadrant, containing four animals. The rabbit signifies female fecundity; the hound, masculine sexual prowess; and the stag and doe reiterate the male and female animal principles. Between the roundels are three erotic scenes: at the left, a naked woman is being courted by a fool; at the right, a woman, who stands washing

herself in a bathtub, is surprised by an ardent youth who steps in and grabs hold of her; and the scene at the foot of the print shows a man lying on his back whilst a woman, apparently avid with sexual passion, is hurriedly undressing him as her hair and clothing fly around her, as if full of movement. Bordering the print is a decorative pattern of fruit and vegetation, interlaced with a ribbon which bears an inscription reading "*AMOR VUOL FE E DOVE FE NONNE AMOR NON PUO*" (Love commands loyalty, and where there is no loyalty, neither can there be love).⁵⁸ This same inscription is common to several of the Otto prints, including one which simply depicts a nude woman reclining in a landscape (Fig. 81): it appears to be intended to convey the sexual obligation of the married woman to her husband.

All of the above images, represented in either *cassoni* panels or prints, strongly suggest that the reclining nude female was specifically intended to allude to impending marriage; in particular, the sexual receptiveness of the woman, either as passive acquiescence or as active seduction. Although the popularity of the subject of the reclining nude appears to have evolved from images relating to the mundane sexual aspects of marriage, the impetus for this newly developed Renaissance motif was, undoubtably, also associated with classical precedent which served to idealise the subject.

In classical art, there is no extant evidence that Venus herself was ever depicted as a reclining nude; but there are numerous examples of other mythological figures (male, female and androgynous) depicted in this

posture.⁵⁹ Images of Hermaphrodite are particularly relevant as precedents, since Hermaphrodite was the Roman cult god of marriage, symbolically expressing the union of the male and female principles. In the Renaissance era the figure was known both as a sign of the virtuous union of marriage and also as an erotic motif representing sensuality.⁶⁰ Images of the reclining Hermaphrodite usually show the figure accompanied by a small group of winged *erotes* (Fig. 82 a and b)

The inclusion of *putti* in paintings of the reclining nude coincides with a general increase in the taste for paintings depicting infants in various guises, an interest that reflects the classical precedent of Roman relief sculpture, in which *putti* also have both narrative and decorative roles. Of the numerous paintings of the sixteenth century that depict a reclining woman with *putti*, some do not directly represent Venus but simply allude to her. However, in paintings where one of the accompanying figures is clearly identifiable by his attributes as Cupid/Amor, the reclining figure can be assumed to represent Venus herself, or a woman in the guise of Venus: such is the painting that initiated this discussion, namely, Venus and Cupids by the Brescianini.

Following this survey of the reclining nude motif in general, Venus and Cupids can now be further assessed and the role of Jocus better defined. The Brescianini painting covertly alludes to carnal love, probably in the context of nuptial celebrations. Jocus is visually linked with the doves of Venus, signifying sexual passion; and he points to his companion, Amor. Thus, it is

reasonable to assume that he is the personification not merely of *giuoco* 'play', but of "*giuoco d'amore*", the euphemism for sexual union (already traced in both Latin and vernacular Italian literary sources). His inclusion in this painting reiterates and emphasises the erotic nature of the scene.

Although it has been demonstrated that in fifteenth-century Tuscany the reclining nude motif was often used in the context of works of art celebrating marriage, it should not be assumed that marriage continued to be the exclusive reason for artists using this subject. By the sixteenth century it had become a subject more common in easel paintings than in *cassone* panels; and an examination of later paintings shows that the suggestion of sexuality was often an adequate reason in itself to utilise the motif. For example, in the 1530s, Michelangelo's erotic *Leda and the Swan* (Fig. 73), followed soon after by his cartoon for a painting of *Venus and Cupid* (Fig. 74), have no connection with marriage ceremonies: the latter was intended to decorate one of the rooms of Bartolomeo Bettini, to accompany portraits of the Tuscan love poets painted by Bronzino.⁶¹ Nevertheless, the Brescianini painting of *Venus and Cupids* may, indeed, have been intended as a painting to commemorate a marriage: the bright red cloth on which Venus lies conforms with a classical literary analogy: in an epithalemic poem by Claudian, in which, at the marriage of Venus and Mars, a "cloth of scarlet dye, as befits a marriage, adorns the bridal chamber."⁶²

The reclining nude was a well-established subject in painting by the time that Venus and Cupids was produced. However, the inclusion of Jocus appears to have been an innovation that has yet to be explained. Until the middle of the 1520s, the Brescianini were working in Siena, and it may be from that artistic milieu that the evolution of the Jocus figure possibly derives. A substantial group of paintings from Siennese workshops depict a similar composition to Venus and Cupids. Of these, the following have been selected for examination here: Venus with Amor and Amorini by Girolamo della Pacchia (1477-1535) (Fig. 83); Reclining Venus by Domenico Beccafumi (c1486-1551) (Fig. 84); and Reclining Venus and Amorini in a Landscape (Fig. 85) (at one time also attributed to Beccafumi, although now recognised to be of inferior craftsmanship).⁶³

All of these paintings are on narrow rectangular panels and are arguably, therefore, *cassone* paintings. None has a complete provenance, but the dates attributed to them are all around 1520.⁶⁴ Each painting depicts a reclining female figure, and her group of companion *putti* includes one who carries a plaything. Although this attribute differs in form in each painting, the general similarity of the motif suggests a local, specifically Siennese, interest. The variations in the plaything itself are slight: in Della Pacchia's painting (Fig. 83), the *putto* holds an object that resembles a small, bell-shaped parasol such as can be found in certain examples of Roman art (Fig. 86 a and b); in the anonymous Reclining Venus and Amorini in a Landscape (Fig. 85) it is a

wheel on a stick; and in Beccafumi's Reclining Venus (Fig. 84) it is a toy windmill.

The compositional similarity between two of these panels (Della Pacchia's and the anonymous painting) and the Brescianini painting of Venus and Cupids is striking: in each of these three works, one *putto* is depicted climbing on the hip of Venus whilst another is standing at her feet.⁶⁵ The arrangement of figures in Venus and Cupids differs from the other two only in that the *putto* on Venus' hip is Cupid/Amor whilst that holding the playing thing stands at her feet; this is exactly the reverse of the positions of the *putti* in the two other paintings, where it is Cupid/Amor who is shown standing. These Sieneese reclining nudes are so similar in concept that it is reasonable to assume that they were executed around the same period, and that the artists were fully cognizant of one another's work.

Beccafumi's painting is only slightly different: the recumbent figure is not completely nude, but clothed in a revealing and flimsy dress of rose pink shot with yellow. It should be noted that the bare breast is quite flat and arms muscular, presenting a rather masculine form beneath the feminine attire. It is possible that it was intended to suggest a hermaphroditic figure, deemed appropriate to signify the sexual union of male and female at marriage. In this panel there is only one accompanying figure: a playing *putto* holding a child's toy windmill, who crouches behind the principally-female figure's shoulder.⁶⁶ At approximately the same date, Beccafumi painted a similar infant in another

of his works, the tondo Caritas, which depicts two playing children (Fig. 87): each rides a hobbyhorse; and whilst one carries a toy windmill, the other holds a wheel on a stick identical with that in the anonymous Venus with Amorini in a Landscape.⁶⁷ Again, the impression of close artistic interaction is inescapable.

The comparison of these Sieneese panel paintings suggests that the innovation of depicting a playing *putto* as an appropriate companion to a reclining figure in a painting celebrating a marriage, could be attributable to these Sieneese artists. They, in turn, may well have been inspired by popular classical and classicising images of the Roman cult god of marriage, Hermaphrodite, with *amoretti*. Beccafumi's painting, in particular, depicts a slightly hermaphroditic figure with the hair, face and gown of a woman but the chest and muscular arms of a man.

The various forms of the object held by the playing *putti*, however, indicates experimentation rather than any clearly defined identification of the figures. It cannot be assumed that any one of them was intended to represent the classical Jocus; it seems more likely, especially in light of the conclusions made previously in this study, that the playing *putti* were intended as a signification of "*ludus puerorum*", the euphemistic expression then in use to denote sexual encounter or coitus.⁶⁸ Thus far, only the playing *putto* in the Brescianini's Venus and Cupids is recognisable as Jocus; and this is due entirely to its similarity to "*il Giuoco*" in Vasari's Penitence. Analysis of the

second relevant Brescianini painting, Venus with Two Amorini, provides new evidence which lends further support to this identification.

ii. Venus with Two Amorini

The second Brescianini painting to include a figure apparently identifiable as Jocus (Fig. 77) is an oil painting on panel in the Borghese Gallery in Rome. It now measures 168 x 67 centimetres; but, judging by the slightly cropped composition, it appears to have been cut down from its original size at some time. It depicts a life-size, nude Venus stepping from an arched niche that encompasses the entire picture plane. Shown behind her, one at each side, are two naked *putti*; one holds a bow with the end propped on the ground at his feet and can thus be identified as Cupid/Amor; the other holds aloft a rattle hung with bells, which, as we have seen, identifies him as Jocus. Venus is portrayed with a scallop shell in her hand, looking into it as if it were a mirror. Her body is illuminated from the left, casting a shadow on the ground and dramatically contrasting with the darkness of the background niche where her *putti* are partially shaded.

The earliest record of the painting is found in Jacopo Manilli's *Villa Borghese fuori di Porta Pinciana* (Rome, 1650); there it is attributed to Andrea del Sarto, an attribution that was repeated in successive inventories of the contents of the Villa Borghese.⁶⁹ Subsequently, from the nineteenth century

onwards, it has been variously attributed to Beccafumi (by Platner), to Franciabigio (by Venturi) and to Puligo (by Voss).⁷⁰ In 1911, however, Gustavo Frizzoni considered it to be a work of Andrea Brescianino and the consensus of informed opinion has, thereafter, supported him.⁷¹ However, the clear delineation of form in the painting of Venus's body and facial features, that gives her a firm, sculptural quality, contrasts with the style used for the two *amorini*, that have been painted with a softer *chiaroscuro*, especially in the painting of the eyes. Whilst this may merely have been in order to suggest that the latter are standing in shadow, rather it seems that two different hands were at work within the painting, thus supporting the suggestion that it was executed conjointly by the two Brescianini brothers, Andrea and Raffaello.

Iconographically, the figures have been painted with minimal attributes: only the shell that Venus holds identifies her as the sea-born goddess of love of classical mythology;⁷² Cupid/Amor has only his bow; and Jocus carries his rattle. Nevertheless, these are sufficient for the viewer to establish their identities. Compositionally, *Venus with Two Amorini* is not without precedent: the nude female figure in a niche, with or without *putti*, was a popular format with Raphael (seen in engravings of his work by Marcantonio Raimondi).⁷³

However, the portrayal of Venus flanked by two *putti* bears a strong visual similarity to one particular, quite different source: in a Siennese codex of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, known today as the Yates-Thompson Codex, is an

illustration of Dante's and Beatrice's encounter with the "Sphere of Venus"

(Fig. 88), the central part of which closely resembles *Venus with Two*

Amorini.⁷⁴ The fifteenth century illustration is located at the beginning of the eighth canto of the "Paradise":

*Solea creder lo mondo in suo pericolo
Che la bella Ciprigna il folle amore
raggiasse, volta nel terzo epiciclo:
Per che . . . a lei faceano onore
Di sacrificio e di votivo grido
Le genti antichi nell' antico errore;*

(The world was wont to believe to its peril, that the fair Cyprian,
wheeling in the third epicycle, rayed down mad love; wherefore the
ancient people in their ancient error . . . did her honor with sacrifice and
votive cry;)⁷⁵

The complete illustration depicts Dante and Beatrice floating upwards, to the right of the picture; behind them, the central scene shows an island on which is a temple with two steps, represented as an arched niche; outside the temple are four kneeling worshippers; and within stands naked Venus with two *amorini*, one at each side of her. Venus is shown holding a sceptre in her left hand, whilst her right rests on the head of one of the *putti*. The *putti* themselves have no attributes to identify them. This illustration, and several others in the Yates-Thompson Codex, are considered to be the work of Giovanni di Paolo (1403?-82), who was a prolific and well-known Siennese painter.⁷⁶

Apart from the visual similarity of the Brescianini's painting with Giovanni de Paolo's manuscript illustration, there is also a certain textual significance, deriving from John Pope-Hennessy's research into the Yates-

Thompson manuscript, in which he aims to account for the unique inclusion of twin *amoretti* accompanying Venus in the context of Dante's Paradise. His research has revealed (and this has already been commented upon previously in this study) that Giovanni di Paolo must have been using the *Ottimo commento* on the Paradise in planning his illustrations.¹⁷ As part of his evidence, Pope-Hennessy points out that only in the *Ottimo* is there an extraordinary and unique interpretation of the eighth canto: it, alone, identifies two individual sons of Venus, namely, Amor and Cupid.¹⁸ The inclusion of two *putti* accompanying Venus in her temple is not found in any other illustrated version of Dante; hence, Pope-Hennessy argues that only by reference to the *Ottimo* interpretation can Giovanni di Paolo's imagery be explained.

If the codex illustration was, indeed, a visual source for Venus with Two Amorini, the identification of the figures has some very interesting implications. Whoever planned the imagery of the painting (the artists, the patron or the patron's *literati*) appears to have returned to the *Ottimo*; and further, they appear to have re-examined the basic text of Dante's Paradise. An additional detail that is implied in both the text and the commentary, but not developed in Giovanni de Paolo's codex illustration is the adjective "*folle*" describing Amor. "*Folle*" conveys both folly and madness, but in Renaissance Italy it also had the colloquial meaning of sensuality.¹⁹ Dante, then, endowed Amor not only with lust, but also with folly, an attribute that is not usually

associated with his companion, Cupid. The panel painting of Venus with Two Amorini appears to address this issue.

Precedents for a lustful folly-figure, representative of "*il folle Amor*", already existed in the figure of Jocus: in the *Ovide Moralisé*, he and Cupid are described as twin sons of Venus, using the same adjective, "*folle*".⁸⁰ Inevitably, this triad of figures would have brought to mind the related and well-known literary imagery of Horace: "*sive tu mavis Erycina ridens quam Iocus circumvolat et Cupido*"; since Horace's odes were so popular in sixteenth-century Tuscany, single phrases from them were used to allude to the content of whole passages. One of the best pieces of evidence for this is a report describing the celebrations of the nuptials of Cosimo de' Medici in 1539: every display on the route of the wedding procession was accompanied by inscriptions from the classics, above all from the Odes of Horace.⁸¹ Thus, it would be natural for a literary image of Venus and Cupid with an additional companion representing "*folle amor*" (such as the *Ottimo* suggests) to have evoked parallel images, even, perhaps, those in the *Ovide Moralisé* and Horace's Ode to Augustus in which that companion is named Jocus.

An additional factor in accepting a common identity for "*il folle Amor*" and Jocus is an appreciation of the contemporaneous euphemism for sex, "*giuoco d'amore*": the phrase is evoked whenever Jocus is placed beside Amor and is a particularly appropriate play of words and images:⁸² a *putto* recognisable as Jocus, with an identity which overtly suggests playfulness and

folly, thereby carried an underlying and well-understood meaning of carnality when depicted as a companion of Venus and Cupid.

Giovanni di Paolo's illustration can only be considered a plausible source for the imagery of Venus with Two Amorini if the Yates-Thompson Codex was accessible to the people connected with the Borghese painting. Initially the matter seems straightforward: the illustration had been produced by a Sienese artist in Siena, and the Brescianini brothers, who executed Venus with Two Amorini were also from that city. Investigation of the provenance of the codex, however, rules out the possibility that either the Brescianini or their patron saw the codex in Siena. Although it had been produced there, probably between 1438 and 1444, it was destined for the Royal library in Naples.⁸³ At the bottom of the first folio is the shield of the Aragonese kings of Naples, which was used in the royal library only from late 1439 until 1492. The codex, therefore, must have arrived in Naples between those dates, probably in the 1440s. It has been assumed that it stayed there until 1538, when it appeared in the library of the monastery of San Miguel de los Reyes near Valencia in Spain.⁸⁴

A copy of an inventory, written between 1508 and 1513 by the humanist Fabio Vigile di Spoleto, suggests a different possibility. It lists certain royal books belonging to King Alphonso which were sent from the royal library of

Naples, mandated to Lorenzo de' Medici for the Medici Laurentian Library. Amongst these were certain, unspecified "Dantes"⁸⁵. Since Lorenzo died in April 1492, this transfer of books must have occurred prior to that date, but no original inventory has yet been found to establish an exact date. In terms of the Yates-Thompson Codex, if this was one of those "Dantes" cited, then its location in the Florentine Laurentian Library would have guaranteed its accessibility to Florentine *literati* and other persons of influence. The evidence presented here, relating the Brescianini's Venus with Two Amorini to Giovanni de Paolo's codex illustration, is clearly conjectural; nevertheless, such speculative debate has the value of revealing possible avenues by which new secular iconography and novel subject matter could have developed during this later phase of the Renaissance.

It remains to consider the provenance of Venus with Two Amorini and the people connected with its production in order to establish whether the utilisation of a personification of Jocus related to the interests of a particular group of people. It has been estimated that this painting was executed in the 1520s.⁸⁶ The earliest provenance of the painting is unknown, but in 1650 it was first cited by Manilli (albeit as a work of Andrea del Sarto) stating that it was part of the estate of Cardinal Antonio Maria Salviati (1537-1602).⁸⁷ It passed by inheritance into the Borghese family, and was kept in the Borghese archive in the Vatican until 1634, when the family eventually decided to make

Rome their principal residence.⁸⁸ It has remained in the collection of paintings of the Villa Borghese ever since.

The patron who commissioned the painting of Venus with Two Amorini is not known, but certain plausible assumptions can be made. Manilli had established that the first known owner of the painting was Cardinal Antonio Maria Salviati; but, at the age of sixteen, Antonio Maria had inherited the estate of his uncle, Cardinal Giovanni Salviati, who, because of his political and cultural prestige, had been considered the head of the Salviati family after the death of his own father, Jacopo.⁸⁹ Giovanni was a great patron of the arts. He employed many artists to decorate his palaces and add to his collection of paintings. Possibly, Cardinal Giovanni Salviati was the original patron who commissioned the painting of Venus with Two Amorini from Andrea and Raffaello Brescianino in the 1520s.

Certain coincidental circumstances point to the viability of this conjecture: in 1529, the artist Francesco Rosso studied in the workshop of Raffaello Brescianino, with his friend, Giorgio Vasari;⁹⁰ and a short time later, around 1531, Francesco was taken into the service of the same Cardinal Giovanni Salviati, a circumstance that earned the artist the better-known name of Francesco Salviati (1510-1563). A circumstantial connection, then, is established between Cardinal Giovanni Salviati and the Brescianini workshop, through Francesco Rosso. In addition, Raffaello Brescianino's other student, Vasari, adopted the Venus-Amor-Jocus triad in his own repertoire of images

about a decade later, and clearly identified the figures in his *Ricordanze*.

Indeed, Vasari also identified Jocus in a painting by yet another of his contemporaries, Agnolo Bronzino, and thus points the way to the next painter of interest in this investigation.

CHAPTER IV:3

JOCUS IN THE WORK OF AGNOLO BRONZINO

The chain of associations between artists and subject matter, outlined in the previous chapters of this section, continues with a fourth artist, Agnolo di Cosimo (or Tori), called Bronzino (1503-72). Bronzino was a Florentine and the favorite pupil of Jacopo Pontormo (1494-1556), one of the principal exponents of Mannerism. Both of these artists were painters in the service of Cosimo I de' Medici, for whom Vasari also began painting in the 1540s. Bronzino was not only a contemporary and an associate of Vasari, but also claimed to be a lifelong friend.⁹¹ In the *Vite*, Vasari's description of Bronzino's painting of An Allegory of Venus and Cupid (c.1545) (Fig. 89) (now in the National Gallery in London) reveals that Bronzino, too, utilised the figure of Jocus in his work.⁹² Further evidence shows that he also depicted Jocus in a tableau included in the *apparati* for the wedding of Francesco de' Medici to Giovanna of Austria, following the instructions of Vincenzo Borghini, literary advisor to Cosimo de' Medici.

i. An Allegory of Venus and Cupid

The Allegory depicts three nude figures as its major focus: Venus, Cupid and a further *putto* that, in light of this study and Vasari's identification, can be recognised as yet another representation of Jocus. This triad is surrounded by four auxilliary figures that are partially concealed and shadowed; thus contrasting with the highlighted nudes. Unlike the three paintings discussed in the previous two chapters, Bronzino's Allegory has been subject to extensive research in recent decades, and all of the figures have been variously identified by different scholars ⁹³.

The most convincing identifications suggest that the two figures painted at the top of the canvas are Oblivion and Time.⁹⁴ Oblivion is represented as a woman located rather inconspicuously in the top left corner; she is apparently attempting to conceal the activities below with a large, brilliant blue cloth. Time is represented in the traditional manner as a bald and bearded man, iconographically identifiable by the hourglass on his shoulder and his wings; he stretches his muscular arm over from the top right, appearing to oppose Oblivion by drawing back the cloth, thus adopting the role of revealer of all things.

Behind Cupid is a sinewy figure, not obviously either male nor female, who tears its hair in anguish. Although usually identified as Jealousy or Envy, in fact it bears a striking resemblance to a figure in a contemporaneous print by

Enea Vico, inscribed "*DOLOR*", Pain or Grief (Fig. 90).⁹⁵ Finally, behind the nude *putto*, there is an enigmatic figure which is often called Fraud or Deceit, a duplicitous creature which offers both the pleasure and sweetness of honey whilst concealing a sting in her reptilian tail.⁹⁶ The figure brings to mind the fable (in Theocritus 19) in which Cupid, whilst stealing a honeycomb, is stung by a bee, thus being reminded that his own barbs give pain as well as pleasure: the tale is reiterated in Alciati's *Emblemata*, following the adage: "*Dulcia quandoque amara fieri . . . Proh dolor, heu sine te gratia nulla datur* (Sweet things sometimes turn bitter . . . Alas, Pain, no favour is given without you).⁹⁷

All of these subsidiary figures form a background which fills the space around the central triad of nudes, visually compressing them toward the front of the canvas. Whatever their true identification, the two shadowed figures behind the main triad of nudes represent the unpleasant side of love; whilst love's pleasures create the illuminated foreground focus of the painting.

Vasari's description of the *Allegory* has been the starting point of all of the many discussions of this painting by modern scholars, despite some apparent discrepancies between the words and the painting:

Fece in quadro di singolare bellezza, che fu mandato in Francia al re Francesco; dentro al quale era una Venere ignuda con Cupido che le baciava, ed il Piacere da un lato e il Giuoco con altri amori, e dall'altro la Fraude, la Gelosia ed altre passione d'amore

(He made a picture of singular beauty which was sent into France to King Francis. It was a nude Venus with Cupid who kissed her, and

Pleasure was on one side as well as Jest and other Cupids, and on the other side was Deceit, Jealousy and other passions of love)⁹⁸

This description, written in the second edition of the *Vite* (1567), some twenty-two years after the execution of the painting by Bronzino and its removal to France, has several inaccuracies: the clearly identifiable figure of Time is not mentioned at all, and neither is Oblivion; yet Vasari refers to "*altri amori*" and "*altri passione*" which, if intended to suggest further figures, are not in evidence in this allegory.⁹⁹ The problem, in this latter case, may merely be one of interpretation: the passage has generally been translated to read: "and at one side was Pleasure and Jocus with other Loves, and at the other [side] Fraud, Jealousy and other passions of love." An alternative reading of the passage, however, may well account for some of the apparent discrepancies: it has recently been suggested that Vasari was not attempting a figure-by-figure interpretation, but, instead, was summing up the meaning of the assembled figures in a more general way, "on the one hand Pleasure, Idle Sport and other kinds of love-making, and, on the other, Fraud and Jealousy and other [negative] passions arising from love"¹⁰⁰ This is a convincing argument; but whichever translation is accepted, Vasari apparently did remember one figure in the *Allegory* as "*il Giuoco*," the vernacular equivalent of Jocus. Can such an identification be supported by the painting itself, and by the precedents found in literature and visual imagery?

In the foreground triad, Venus, the dominant figure, is painted with porcelain-like flesh in a rather awkward semi-kneeling, semi-reclining posture, zigzagging across the panel. She holds aloft one of Cupid's arrows in one hand; and in the other, a golden apple. Cupid, untypically adolescent in appearance, holds the back of her head and kisses her lips whilst fondling her breast with his other hand. He is entwined with Venus in an awkwardly-twisting posture, whilst he kneels on a soft, red cushion decorated with gold braid and tassels (usually signifying idle luxury).¹⁰¹ Beside his foot is one of Venus's doves.¹⁰² Meanwhile, the attendant *putto* smilingly watches and actively participates in the seduction by stepping toward the embracing couple to throw pink roses over them. Hitherto, this figure has not been given the same attention as the other elements of the painting.

The analogy of this foreground triad with similar groups in the paintings of Vasari and the Brescianini that have already been analysed in the previous two chapters, suggests that the naked *putto* can plausibly be accepted as Jocus. Nevertheless, his attributes seem to differ from those encountered so far. Here, he is portrayed with a ring of bells around one ankle and holding up a handful of roses. The earliest visual representations of Jocus, namely the illustrations for Prudentius's *Psychomachia*, depict him with various noisemakers, in keeping with the textual description in which Jocus "wounds with noise".¹⁰³ Although the text names those noisemakers as the sistrum and cymbals, the medieval illustrators, as has previously been shown, depicted a variety of

musical and percussion instruments, including bells. Similarly, the Brescianini brothers discussed in the foregoing chapter, used bells as the noise-producing part of the toy rattle painted in the hand of Jocus. Indeed, as we have seen, unlike Cupid/Amor, Jocus had no traditionally fixed iconography and there was scope, therefore, for artistic experimentation; and the anklet of bells can thus be regarded as an appropriate attribute for Jocus.

The same adornment is worn by one of the playing *putti* in the Master of the Die's print Frieze with Child Riding a Goat (Fig. 37) (discussed in the previous section in relation *ludus puerorum*). Interestingly, he is the one with a mask, identified as one of the *putti* signalling male sexuality.¹⁰⁴ In the Allegory, too, the playful *putto* is associated with masks: there are two on the ground at his feet; an ugly, satyric one lies beside another that is young and attractive; the pleasant and unpleasant faces of love, perhaps. The same kind of anklet of bells was used again by Bronzino, in this case on a court jester representing Folly, in his Allegory of Happiness, also painted c.1547 for Francesco de' Medici.¹⁰⁵ Since Jocus has also been associated with the folly intrinsic to carnal desire (in, for example, the *Ovide moralisé*) it is likely that Bronzino was making reference to this folly in his Allegory of Venus and Cupid.¹⁰⁶

In addition to the bells, Bronzino painted the *putto* stepping on a thorn that pierces right through his other foot; yet despite this, his cheeky smile implies that immediate pleasure makes him oblivious to the pain. He is

experiencing a wound normally associated with Venus: hurrying to be with her lover, Adonis, she, too, stepped on a rose-thorn; and her blood was said to have tinted the white roses red. Cartari, writing in the *Imagini* several years after the execution of Bronzino's painting, explaining how the rose was given to Venus because of its sweet smell which represents the pleasures of love; and that roses are difficult to gather without feeling the prick of their sharp thorns; "for", he continues, "it seems that lust always carries ugliness, and, pricked by conscience, we afterwards feel great pain [*dolor*]."¹⁰⁷ A similar explanation was given by Boccaccio in his *Genealogia Deorum*, written some two hundred years earlier, but still popular in the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁸ Both the rose and its thorn are attributes of Venus, herself. In putting the pink roses into the hands of Jocus, ready to throw over the goddess, and by painting the thorn piercing his foot, Bronzino thereby indicates that this smiling boy is in the direct service of Venus.¹⁰⁹ Bronzino's use of rose-petals is reminiscent of the violets and rose petals that Prudentius chose for *Luxuria* 'Lust' to fight with in his *Psychomachia*: "*Sed violas lasciva iacit, foliisque rosarum / Dimicat, . . .*"¹¹⁰

The *Allegory* further suggests incestuous lust, conveyed by the fondling embrace of Venus by her adolescent son.¹¹¹ The presence of Jocus increases the sinful nature of the scene by indicating the imminent fulfilment of their carnal desire. Various visual metaphors, associated with the foreground triad of nudes, signal this intention: Venus holds Cupid's arrow as if it will eventually pierce her, a phallic allusion; her golden apple is symbolic of sexual

temptation (alluding to Eve), as well as a reward for victory (alluding to the Judgement of Paris). At the moment depicted, she appears to withhold the apple from her son, and Jocus pauses in the act of throwing the rose petals over the embracing couple: the moment is climactic; sexual fulfilment seems imminent. Jocus, yet again, personifies the *giuoco d'amore* signalling imminent sexual consummation, heralded by the throwing of the roses over the amorous couple (which possibly further alludes to the tradition of scattering petals over a marriage bed).¹¹²

The bitter-sweet nature of sensual pleasure is evident throughout the painting: whilst Jocus is in the act of throwing Venus's roses, his foot is hurt by the penetration of the rose's thorn (another sexual allusion); in the shadows behind him hovers the hybrid creature that also offers both pleasure and pain; and the dark figure behind the embracing couple offsets their pleasure by its obvious anguish. Whilst Oblivion attempts to conceal these proceedings, Time is destined to reveal their consequences. The entire content of Bronzino's Allegory is concerned with the immediate pleasures of unrestrained carnal fulfilment set against the subsequent pains; the recurrent enigma of love.

The complex allegory has been found by the various scholars who have studied the iconography to utilise a variety of literary allusions; but no single source has been found that accounts for all of the visual elements. The complexity suggests that the patron, Cosimo de' Medici, and his artist, Bronzino, were utilizing the expertise of a literary advisor, but one whose

identity remains unknown. It is possible that it was Vincenzo Borghini, then newly established in Florence, but later to be an extremely influential designer of artistic programmes. Indeed, some twenty years after the Allegory was painted, Borghini was responsible for devising another programme for Cosimo, for which Bronzino was again employed to paint the image of Jocus: in the ephemera for the marriage festival of Cosimo's son, Francesco.

ii. Bronzino, Borghini and the *Apparato* for the Wedding of Francesco de' Medici

The *Apparato* of 1565 celebrated the marriage of Francesco de' Medici and Giovanna d'Austria; and Vincenzo Borghini was appointed to design the programme.¹¹³ He chose to include the image of Jocus amongst the ephemeral monuments of the *Ponte alla Carraia* near the *Palazzo de' Ricasoli* in a display dedicated to the god of marriage, Hymen. A statue of the god bore a garland of flowering marjoram, a torch, and a veil, with an inscription below, *BONI CONJUGATOR AMORIS*; and the figure was flanked by two personifications, Love and Conjugal Fidelity. Jocus was depicted in two of three paintings set beneath these statues: they were painted by Bronzino and depicted the "desirable" attributes of marriage. Vasari, in his *Vite*, noted the high quality of these three, large paintings, "worthy," he said, "to be set in some honorable place forever" rather than mere festival ephemera.¹¹⁴

A letter from Borghini to Bronzino describes the plan for the paintings.¹¹⁵ In the central picture, the Three Graces were to be accompanied

by four couples, male and female personifications of the pleasures of love:

"*Coppia la Gioventù col Diletto; la Bellezza col Contento; l'Allegrezza col Gioco; la Fecondità col Riposo.*" The right-hand picture was to show these same personifications together with *l'Amore* and *la Fidelità*, chasing away such "undesirable" attributes as *la Gelosia*, *l'Affano*, *il Dolore*, *il Pianto*, *l'Ignanno*, *la Sterilità* and *il Dispiacere*, in a kind of *psychomachia*. The painting on the left was to depict the Three Graces, together with various gods and goddesses preparing the marriage bed.

Bronzino's designs for some of these paintings still exist. The sketches (Figs. 91 and 92), unfortunately, show few details, although it is recorded that in the final paintings each personification bore an attribute allowing immediate recognition.¹¹⁶ One of the figures, however, is familiar from Bronzino's painting of the Allegory twenty years earlier: it may be significant that a *putto* central to the composition of The Preparation of the Marriage Bed is identical in both posture and position with the *putto* identified as Jocus in the Allegory (compare Figs. 92 and 89). Instead of holding up the handful of rose petals, however, this winged *putto* holds up a flaming torch whilst other figures scatter roses on the marriage bed. An identical torch is shown in the hands of Jocus in Bochiuss's record of the later *apparato* for the inauguration of Prince Albert of the Netherlands and Archduchess Isabella of Spain, in Antwerp in 1599: there, a display is illustrated which shows Isabella as *Venus Victrix* seated on a seashell with Jocus and Cupid at her feet, Jocus holding the flaming torch of

passion and Cupid holding a bow (Fig. 93).¹¹⁷ This image of Jocus and Cupid is identified in Bochiuss's textual description of the display:

*. . . Venus erat cum victoria in manu, scita vultu & amictu puella,
marinae conchae insidens, quam delphines bini ad litus protrahebant;
cum duobus pueris tam concinnè personatis ut nudi viderentur, Jocus erat
& Cupido.*

(. . . Venus, with a victory in her hand, was a girl of fine countenance and garments, sitting on her sea shell, which a pair of dolphins were drawing towards the seashore; with her were two boys so carefully disguised that they will be seen unadorned, Jocus and Cupid.)

This imagery was very probably partially inspired by descriptions of the 1565 *apparato* for the nuptials of Francesco de' Medici and Giovanna of Austria, and the figures designed by Bronzino.

The spaces between Bronzino's paintings were filled with a long Latin epithelamium by Sergio Segni, the ninth verse of which loosely imitated Horace's description of Cupid and Jocus flying about Venus.¹¹⁸ Further, the poem associates Jocus with marriage jokes. Borghini's inclusion of a figure called "*il Giuoco*" in the entourage of the marriage god, Hymen, confirms that Jocus was considered to have a natural place in matters sexual, although there is no specific indication in Bronzino's instructions from Borghini why he chose this figure.

This omission is remedied, however, in a more-informative letter that Borghini wrote explaining his proposed programme to his patron, Cosimo de' Medici, father of the bridegroom.¹¹⁹ There, he describes his plan for the

facade dedicated to Hymen, but he names the four couples accompanying this figure in different terms from those in Bronzino's instructions:

*GIOVENTÙ col DILETTO per una; e par l'altra la BELLEZZA col
CONTENTO; la terza LETIZIA, ovvero SPERANZA, se meglio paresse; col
GI[U]OCO, ovvero SPASSO, secondo quel detto: "Quam locus circumvolat
et Cupido", parlando di Venere, che insomma non é altro che le nozze..."*

In this letter, Borghini is in the process of thinking out his plan, wondering whether to use Gladness or Hope, Sport or Fun; but, more crucially for our discussion, elucidating his selection of *Giuoco*. He explains that his choice is suggested by the line (from Horace's *Ode to Augustus*) referring to Venus, "About whom fly Jocus and Cupid," which, he says, relates especially to the nuptials. Since he does not, himself, mention Horace by name the implication is that the phrase was so well-known as to make such a reference superfluous. On the other hand, he must have felt a need to justify his use of the personification *Giuoco*; perhaps a reminder of the Horatian allusion lending dignity to this common euphemism for sex.

Borghini had carefully researched the records of various nuptial celebrations and triumphal entries throughout Europe in preparation for designing his own programme for the festival of the marriage of Francesco de' Medici to Giovanna of Austria, listing them in his *Libretto*.¹²⁰ None of the earlier nuptial programmes, however, appear to have used the personification of Jocus. Jean Seznec proposes that the mythographies of Giraldi and Cartari, which were first published around this time, were useful sources for those who

designed the festival programmes, including Borghini.¹²¹ Richard Scorza, however, having thoroughly researched the *invenzione* of Borghini, especially in connection with the *apparati* of 1565, disputes this in his case, having found that Borghini was more concerned with authentic classical imagery in seeking to clarify his iconography.¹²²

In the case of Borghini's use of Jocus, none of the mythographies available in 1565 had included this personification from antiquity. It was not until the year following the nuptials of Francesco de' Medici and Giovanna d' Austria, that Cartari introduced the imagery of Venus with Amor and Jocus for the first time, in the second edition of his *Genealogia*. This suggests the possibility that Cartari was influenced by the imagery designed by Borghini for the *apparato* rather than *vice versa*, thus supporting the theory of Scorza over that of Seznek.

It has been shown here that Giorgio Vasari and Vincenzo Borghini are the two writers whose clearly documented records confirm the utilisation of the figure of Jocus in painting during the mid-sixteenth century. In fact, their connection with one another was much stronger than that: although Borghini was responsible for providing the programme for the *apparato* for the nuptials of Francesco and Giovanna, Vasari was his fellow organiser, most likely responsible for arranging its execution and furnishing the exact artistic

detail.¹²³ Indeed, Vasari, himself, sketched out an initial proposal for the layout of the Hymen monument and sent it to Borghini on June 10th, 1565 (Fig. 94). It is thought to be the same sketch whose receipt was acknowledged by Bronzino on June 13th.¹²⁴

Vasari and Borghini very likely first met in either Florence or Arezzo in 1541. In that year, Borghini was ordained in Florence and then went to Arezzo, Vasari's home town.¹²⁵ In the same year Vasari returned to Florence from his travels and purchased a new family house in Arezzo. It is worth noting that this was also the year that Vasari painted his *St Jerome* for Ottaviano de' Medici, with the inclusion of the Venus-Amor-Jocus triad. By 1549, a letter from Borghini to Vasari implies that Borghini was making a point of seeing Vasari's work wherever possible.¹²⁶ Thereafter, they worked closely together in Florence, Borghini eventually becoming a guiding figure in most major artistic projects in that city. Indeed, the two men were such close friends that their malicious contemporary, Benvenuto Cellini, wrote caustically that the two were really one, even though they seemed to be two: "*Giorgio Aretin e quel frate priore sono uno stesso, se ben paion due.*"¹²⁷ Given this close association between Vasari and Borghini it seems highly plausible that Vasari passed on to his friend his own enthusiasm for the Horatian triad motif.

SUMMARY OF PART FOUR

The artists whose paintings have been the subject of this examination, because of the inclusion of the classical personification, Jocus, in their *oeuvre*, have strong and verifiable connections with one another. Central, even crucial, to the group is Giorgio Vasari. Not only did he depict Jocus in his painting of St Jerome in Penitence, but he also documented the identity of the figure in both his *Ricordanza* and his *Vite*. Vasari's youthful training provides a probable explanation for the manner in which he portrayed Jocus: in 1529, at the age of eighteen, he trained in the Florence workshop of Raffaello Brescianino, who, with his brother Andrea, included Jocus in their paintings of Venus and Cupids and Venus with Two Amorini in the 1520s. Since both works show the figure holding a very similar attribute to that in Vasari's own painting, it is reasonable to assume that he may have seen one or the other of them during his year in the Brescianino workshop.

There is, however, another route by which Vasari may have encountered (or renewed contact with) the Brescianini figure of Jocus: namely, through his patron for the Penitence, Ottaviano de' Medici. Ottaviano was married to Francesca Salviati, whose nephew, Cardinal Antonio Maria Salviati, later owned the Brescinini painting of Venus with Two Amorini. It is highly probable that Antonio Maria acquired the painting by inheritance from his

uncle, Cardinal Giovanni Salviati (brother of Ottaviano's wife) who may well have been the original owner. Since the Medici and Salviati families were, thus, closely allied by marriage, Ottaviano could have already been familiar with Venus with Two Amorini when he commissioned Vasari to paint his Penitence. Thus, the circumstantial evidence strongly suggests, that both Vasari and his patron, Ottaviano, had a visual acquaintance with at least one of the Brescianini paintings. The similarity in form of the toy rattle that each artist painted as an attribute of Jocus, as well as their mutual use of the Venus-Amor-Jocus triad is, therefore, unlikely to be accidental.

In the mid-1540s, shortly after Vasari completed his painting of the Penitence, his associate Agnolo Bronzino painted the Allegory for Cosimo de' Medici; yet another artist employing the classically derived Venus-Cupid-Jocus triad to signify the pleasures of love. The figure of Jocus portrayed by Bronzino, however, makes no visual reference to those of either Vasari or the Brescianini: he gave his *putto* a handful of roses and an anklet of bells as attributes. In fact, despite the similarity of the plaything painted by Vasari and that painted by the Brescianini, there was no attempt by any of the artists to slavishly copy one another's imagery: rather, the appeal of the motif apparently lay in its reference to Horace's poetic use of the triad of Venus, Amor and Jocus.

Around the same time that Vasari painted his Penitence, he made an apparently-new acquaintance: he met Vincenzo Borghini who was to become

his close friend, as well as the most influential literary advisor for artists working in Florence. Borghini's interests were historical and mythological, and it appears that the Horatian image of Venus, Amor and Jocus appealed to him, too; because, some twenty years later, he personally advised the use of the figure of Jocus in the *apparato* for the nuptials of Cosimo de' Medici's son, Francesco, and in so doing cited the lines from Horace's *Ode to Augustus*. Since Vasari, himself, was closely involved with Borghini in the preparation of the *apparato*, and it is possible that it was at his instigation that Borghini included the figure of Jocus, though, interestingly, not as part of the usual triad with Venus and Amor, but presumably because Jocus seemed appropriate to all the marriage jokes relating to good luck and fertility. The artist chosen for the execution of the panels that included the Jocus figure was, once again, Agnolo Bronzino.

The cumulative circumstantial evidence clearly suggests that these artists and their patrons were familiar with one another's paintings, and specifically with the paintings discussed here. It is reasonable to assume that the motif of the Venus-Amor-Jocus triad, with its Horatian allusion, had a particular attraction for this group of people. Each patron, in turn, had been sufficiently impressed with the motif to have instructed his artist to incorporate it into his own commissions. It should not be forgotten, however, that for both

Renaissance patrons and artists there existed an underlying sensual appeal to this motif, beyond the intellectual appeal.

In this entire group of paintings, it is clear that, despite their individual differences, they had a mutual objective: the painters were all engaged in the common enterprise of conveying carnal love using Venus with her attendant *putti*. Specifically, each has the problem of alluding to the sexual nature of their subject, but in a subtle manner, avoiding the pornographic. Venus and Cupid, depicted alone, can represent many shades of amorous meaning. The inclusion of Jocus adds the significant message of carnality to those who understand the allusion; whilst appearing as an innocent, playing child to those who do not.

The most sexually explicit work is Bronzino's *Allegory*, the eroticism of which, arguably, derives from the degree of intimacy depicted between Venus and Cupid. The role of Jocus, signalling the *giuoco d'amore*, serves to confirm the sexual intent of the painting's imagery. The earlier paintings by the Brescianini and Vasari appear to our eyes to be more ambiguous in their visual messages; in these, an appreciation of the role of Jocus is crucial to a thorough interpretation of the full sexual implications of the subject matter. It is only with a new insight into the significance of the euphemistic and figurative meaning of the Latin noun *iocus* and its vernacular Italian equivalent *giuoco* (when used in the context of love) that the sexual intention of the paintings becomes explicit. Thus, the lustful nature of St Jerome's temptation is no

longer conjectural in Vasari's version of the Penitence; the standing Venus can be recognised as an object of deliberate erotic display in the Brescianini painting of Venus with Two Amorini; and the reclining nude motif is better understood as overtly sexually in their painting of Venus and Cupids.

When Vasari painted his St Jerome in Penitence for Ottaviano de' Medici, he depicted Jocus with another attribute which points to a further aspect of the nature of this personification, namely, as a figure associated with folly: he depicted him riding a hobbyhorse which looks like a fool's *marotte*. Similarly, Bronzino painted his Jocus with a ring of bells around his ankle, thus associating him, also, with familiar images representing Folly. This second aspect of the nature of Jocus, that has already been discussed in the context of medieval literature, reminds the viewer that folly is an intrinsic aspect of carnal desire. This dimension of the iconography of Jocus is most interesting since it relates these classically-based Italian artworks to a much stronger development that occurred in northern European art.

As a post-script to this study, a summary of the development of an ancient tradition associating folly with love and sexuality, that occurred most noticeably north of the Alps, follows; and, further, an examination of the development of a sixteenth-century northern-humanist interest in depicting Folly as a small child. Thus, we see the development of the image of Jocus

within a wider cultural context; setting it against a well-established, parallel convention of depicting Folly in northern art, a convention which itself was in the process of change.

PART FIVE

POST-SCRIPT

PERSONIFYING FOLLY: A NORTHERN EUROPEAN TRADITION

CHAPTER V:1

THE CHANGING CONCEPT OF FOLLY IN THE RENAISSANCE

It is not surprising that Jocus, personification of sexual play, should also have attributes that signal folly, since the association of love, or rather lust, with foolish madness is both universal and age-old. Phallic demons, regarded as clowns because of their obscene pantomimic acts, were an integral part of the oldest fertility rituals in many parts of the world.¹ In western Europe carnival processions of the Middle Ages that had evolved from such early fertility rituals were usually led by a Fool figure and retained similar elements of sexual explicitness. Eventually, the dramatic tradition of carnival characterised lustful folly as a Fool; and north of the Alps, although not in Italy, that tradition was strongly reflected in the visual arts. The visual

development of the theme of man's folly in the face of carnal temptation can be traced in a variety of forms, from prints deriving from the *Fastnachtspiele* (Figs. 95 and 96); to erotic bawdy images (Figs. 97, 98 and 99); to numerous Love Garden scenes, in which, from the fifteenth through the sixteenth centuries, the Fool was a constant companion of lovers, or, indeed, played the lover himself (Figs. 100 and 101).²

Northern European art, in contrast to the Italian, visually exploited every aspect of folly in general, but especially foolish sexual behaviour, incorporating a strong moralising message. German and Dutch graphic arts, in particular, reflect the prevalent social concern with fornication and adultery. The dominant means used to convey censure of foolish behaviour was to personify that folly as a carnival Fool: a figure depicted as the familiar jester, with asses ears on his hood, bells adorning his clothing, and a *marotte* in his hand. The "folly of love" topos was strongly medieval in its moralising tone and, thus, seems to have held little interest for Italian artists, who were, generally, preoccupied with developing classical motifs.

Interestingly, even north of the Alps, the use of the Fool/Jester in the visual arts appears to have experienced a sudden demise around the middle of the sixteenth century.³ Gradually, the condemnatory, moralising tone, evident in much fifteenth-century art, had been diminishing and giving way to a mocking, carnivalesque mood with less obvious castigation and more humour. What can account for such a change from a perception of Folly as an evil vice

(a phenomenon already encountered in Chapter III:3) to an apparently more benign attitude where Folly is seen as mere naïvety? A likely explanation is to be found in changing socio-religious attitudes. Such a change is revealing and worthy of further exploration.

In visual imagery, the change was marked by the development of a new kind of image personifying Folly in northern European art, one that relates more closely to Italian representations of Jocus: the Fool/Jester figure became less common, and works of art began to be produced in which a playing child apparently represents Folly. A survey of the religious background of this change serves to clarify some of the forces subliminally at work on the artists and patrons of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and, thus, offers a possible explanation for the acceptance of a revised pictorial iconography of Folly that began to appear in sixteenth-century northern art.

The Old Testament concept of "the Fool", a sinner personifying folly, was predominant in literature during the Middle Ages and prevailed throughout the fifteenth century in Europe.⁴ Fools' problems were felt to be spiritual: they liked their folly and preferred their delusions to the truth. Biblical axioms nourished this attitude: "The careless ease of fools shall destroy them" (Proverbs I,32); "Fools make a mock of sin" (Proverbs XIV,9). In the Middle Ages, people who behaved like the fools of the Old Testament were

condemned by Church and moralists alike; they were considered to be in disgrace, for they were failures and sinners, indulging themselves in vice.

Didactic literature concerned with folly was familiar all over Europe; and, with the invention of the printing press in Germany, the last quarter of the fifteenth century saw such literature abundantly reproduced in order to teach conformity to a strict social and moral code. Offenders against the code were dubbed "fools" and the word quickly became synonymous with "erring man." To the medieval mind, the Fool stood as a symbol of undesirable conduct. His opposite was the wise man who, from his virtuous viewpoint, could look scornfully at the fool's weakness. The Church encouraged the notion that the world could be divided into the wise and the foolish. The greatest failing of the foolish in Medieval society was their unwillingness to strive for knowledge of God, which made them not only fools but also sinners. Such conduct condemned them to eternal damnation with no hope of salvation.

The kind of literature that reflected this medieval attitude was the long, moral composition, and such books of Latin maxims as the *Disticha Moralia* of Marcus Porcius Cato, popularly known as "the Cato."⁵ The contents of such works imply that man can struggle toward wisdom with proper instruction: "*Animo imperabit sapiens, stultus servit*" (The wise man will control his feelings, the fool will be a slave to them). As in the Old Testament, the fool was continually contrasted to the wise man. The idea of a book being the mirror of a person's conduct was particularly popular: the *Speculum stultorum*

(The Mirror of Fools) written by Nigel Longchamps in 1180, continued to be popular into the fifteenth century, telling the story of an ass who founded his own religious order based on the weaknesses of the established monastic orders; and the *Speculum laicorum* (The Mirror of Laymen) with stories of fools to illustrate religious axioms.

The culmination of this tradition was Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff* or *Ship of Fools*, first published in German in 1494. This was one of the most popular books to use the Fool as a literary device to condemn societal disorder. Brant's verses are reinforced by humorous woodcut illustrations (some of which are by Dürer) showing various fools in action, thus making the book attractive and entertaining to the public. However, it was not Brant's intention to condone their folly, but to show that, to the wise person, the fool is laughable: the humour is based on ridicule of the foolish. Brant was using his *Ship of Fools* as yet another *speculum stultorum* in the Late Medieval manner, a mirror by means of which people were accustomed to take instruction. The *Ship of Fools*, however, despite its many imitators, came at the end of the era of the "disgraced fool."⁶ Slowly, the development of northern humanism was in progress with a new orientation on Biblical teaching and, subsequently, on the nature of folly.

Changes in the concept of folly seem to have paralleled the spread of humanism; therefore, a brief summary of the nature of humanism in the Renaissance period is helpful in setting the scene. The theology and philosophy of Late Medieval scholars, such as Thomas Aquinas, aimed to integrate Christianity with the ancient thought of Aristotle in encyclopaedic works which attempted to systematise all knowledge of God, man and the universe.⁷ In contrast, most Renaissance humanists rejected the metaphysics of such scholastics, regarding it as having no bearing on human needs. Instead, they concerned themselves with the more modest objective of a philosophy of man, thus to provide new approaches to religion. In doing so they greatly increased the secular content of literature and philosophy, using the methods and examples of their classical pagan predecessors. Nevertheless, they directed their thoughts towards the needs of humanity in their own time, within the framework of Christianity.

Humanism developed first in Italy. Even before Petrarch, who is so often credited with being its founder, humanist groups were meeting in several Italian cities at least as early as 1300.⁸ In the fifteenth century, classical education was encouraged in many centres, Florence enjoying particular prestige as a focus of humanist scholarship by the end of the century; and in most other European countries there were interested scholars in communication with Italian humanists. In addition, there was considerable contact between cultures through traffic of merchants, diplomats and armies

across the Alps; and the advent of printing led to a further interchange of ideas, facilitating the dissemination of Italian scholarship throughout Europe.

Several urban areas, particularly in southern Germany and in the Netherlands, grew during the fifteenth century through flourishing international trade, and by the end of the century these, too, were beginning to become thriving centres of humanist scholarship. By the sixteenth century, a radical change of values, away from a medieval orientation towards a new realisation of the potential of humankind, was set in motion. By and large, however, northern European humanism was characterised by biblical studies rather than secular literature: classical learning was put to its greatest use as a means of furthering study of the Bible and reinforcing religious attitudes. Although greatly influenced by the more sophisticated and productive Italians, the work of many northern humanists was independent of Italian models: rather, they developed a distinctive branch of humanism which, because of its concern with religious matters, has been termed "Christian humanism".

One particular type of Christian humanism seems to have been instrumental in bringing about a new attitude toward folly: the *devotio moderna*, developed in the Netherlands by the Brethren of the Common Life. Although initially thoroughly medieval in their teaching methods, by the middle of the fifteenth century progressive members of the movement were beginning to be influenced by humanistic principles.⁹ Their school at Deventer, founded in the middle of the fifteenth century, had, by 1500, become

one of the most advanced centres of classical scholarship in northern Europe. Erasmus of Rotterdam (c.1469-1536) was one of the school's most renowned former pupils, and his role in changing the prevailing image of folly is found to be crucial. His formative years were spent under the guidance of the Brethren both in Deventer and s'Hertogenbosch. Unlike most of his contemporaries, in addition to his biblical scholarship he directed his Christian humanism toward commenting on secular as well as religious life in his time. In 1509 he wrote *Moriae Encomium*, better known as the *Praise of Folly*, which put forward a point of view on folly that differed from the customary *speculum stultorum*.

Erasmus personified Folly as a woman, *Stultitia*, who, far from being castigated as an evil vice, acts as the heroine of the piece. Northern humanists of the period are considered to have been more open to popular influence than were their Italian counterparts,¹⁰ and it is possible, therefore, that Erasmus's heroine derives from popular carnival tradition.¹¹ Having lived in Paris in the 1490s, Erasmus will have been familiar with the French *sotties* and farces of the *sociétés joyeuses* in which the dominant character was often *Mère Sotte* or *Mère Folle*, the queen of fools, who parodied the Christian sermon by praising that which was normally considered undesirable conduct. This is exactly the role of Erasmus's *Stultitia*, who conducts her sermon in typical carnival tradition, albeit liberally laced with classical reference and allusion. However, it was not the gender of his personification of Folly that was influential, but his understanding of foolishness in general.

Erasmus's philosophy, that had its roots in the *devotio moderna*, developed out of the teachings of the mystic, Gerard Groote of Deventer. Groote's theories gradually led the movement to seek out a different kind of Biblical foolishness based on the New Testament, where folly has more positive connotations than in the Old Testament. In the fifteenth century, the writings of two theologians, in particular, epitomise the philosophy of the movement: Thomas à Kempis, who wrote the *Imitation of Christ* (*Imitatio Christi*) in the 1430s, and Nicholas of Cusa who wrote *On Learned Ignorance* (*De Docta Ignorantia*) c.1440.

Kempis, in his *Imitation of Christ*, summed up the beliefs of Groote and his disciples who opposed the prevailing scholasticism of the Catholic Church, by advocating a simpler Christianity (but still within the Catholic system), based on the simplicity and foolishness of Christ proposed in the New Testament. The "wise" were not esteemed: "the purpose of just men depends not on their own wisdom but on God's grace"¹² Indeed, out of the *devotio moderna* came the theological justification of the fool:¹³ as Kempis stated: "Thou must be contented for Christ's sake to be esteemed as a fool in this world."¹⁴

Nicholas Cusanus, in his book *On Learned Ignorance*, supported this view, but in a considerably more cryptic and elusive style which had much less popular appeal. It is considered, however, that Cusanus had the greater effect on the erudite reader, establishing a more positive understanding of foolishness

based especially on Pauline theology and Neoplatonism.¹⁵ He established the notion of the coexistence of wisdom and folly in everyone. He believed that one should strive to approach nearer and nearer to perfection, but that one should never expect to actually achieve it, since to be perfect is to be God. Hence, "the truth of beings is unattainable in its purity . . . and the more deeply we are instructed in this ignorance, the closer we approach the truth."¹⁶ Like Erasmus, both Kempis and Cusanus had been educated in schools operated by the Brotherhood of the Common Life. It is not surprising, then, that St Paul's doctrine of folly, fundamental to the philosophy of the *devotio moderna*, is also reiterated in the Praise of Folly (*Moriae Encomium*).¹⁷

Erasmus was essentially an evangelical humanist; but he was also influenced by the works of the Italian Neoplatonists, Marsilio Ficino (1433-99) and his disciple, Pico della Mirandola (1463-94). Their work was introduced to him through his contact with John Colet and Thomas More in England.¹⁸ The Moriae Encomium was written for More as a Greek pun on More's name, to praise both folly and More. When it was published the book appealed to all kinds of readers, but its true audience was one which was able to follow the many puns, paradoxes and classical references. In it, Erasmus replaced the facetious satire of Brant's Ship of Fools with playfulness and irony. Whereas Brant interpreted folly as synonymous with sin, in the Old Testament way (full of condemnation, and making human nature no excuse for foolish conduct), Erasmus recognised that human nature was weak and irrational and could not

always be controlled by being prudent and reasonable. Further, and of even greater importance to this study, Erasmus firmly believed that in the New Testament, the small child and the fool were synonymous.

Folly as Childish Naïvety

In the Praise of Folly, Erasmus wrote that Christ gave thanks that "the mystery of salvation had been hidden from the wise but revealed to little children, that is fools."¹⁹ He then explains that the Greek word for a child means "foolish" and is the opposite of "wise": "*Nam graece pro parvulis est nepiois, quos opposuit sophois.*" In this statement, Erasmus was alluding to Matthew 11:25, and Luke 10:21: "... thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Further, by equating *parvuli* with *stulti*, it reveals that he was referring back to the original Greek version of the New Testament rather than the Vulgate.²⁰

Erasmus reiterates his theory in some of his other works: in Annotations, as part of his commentary of Matthew 11:25, he explains *parvulis* as the Greek word *nepiois* which has the sense of both fool and infant, who, he says, has no understanding because of his age.²¹ Again, in his *Novum Instrumentum* (1516) he annotated Luke 10:21, explaining that *parvulis* or *nepiois* should preferably be rendered *stultis* (to fools) or *insipientibus* (to the foolish, unwise) in order to properly contrast with *sophois* (to the wise). Indeed, in his own

paraphrase of St Matthew's Gospel, Erasmus substituted *stulti* for *parvuli* to emphasise his belief that the intention was to convey "fools."²²

Many of his contemporaries attacked Erasmus's interpretation, but the growing acceptance of humanism in Northern Europe would have caused many others to accept his point of view. Such debates are a reflection of the changing social and religious attitude towards folly in general in the early-sixteenth century. Moreover, within an intellectual milieu where the parallel between children and fools was a topic of discussion, the notion of representing folly visually as a small child is understandable, and perhaps inevitable. Since the justification for equating folly with childishness was based on biblical exegesis, it is not surprising that the earliest hints of an infant being used by artists to represent divine folly occur in religious works of art.

At about the same time as Erasmus was writing down his ideas on folly, his countryman, the artist Hieronymous Bosch (1450-1516), painted a naked infant carrying a toy windmill (Fig. 102) on the reverse side of a panel of Christ Carrying the Cross. Bosch's purpose in depicting the unusual subject of Boy with a Whirligig has been variously explained by specialists in Bosch's *oeuvre*. The child has been described as the infant Christ taking his first steps on a life that will end with his carrying the cross.²³ However, because of his toy windmill, he has also been interpreted as a symbol of the folly of those who fail to understand the meaning of Christ's suffering.²⁴ Further, the windmill has also led to speculation that this is an Eucharistic reference, to remind the

viewer of the milled grain for flour for the bread that symbolises the body of Christ.²⁵ There may be an element of truth in all of these suggestions; but a consideration of the environment in which Bosch lived could shed further light on what might have been his intentions.

Although there is no documentary evidence of Bosch's education and early life, he is known to have been a leading citizen of s'Hertogenbosch from at least 1480. This town was dominated by the Brethren of the Common Life, who had established a school there and educated Bosch's predecessors, Kempis and Cusanus, and his younger contemporary, Erasmus. Bosch must have been well-aware of the philosophic principles of the *devotio moderna*, based on the New Testament Pauline doctrine of "learned ignorance" that accepted the folly in everyman as a reflection of the divine folly of Christ. Indeed, human folly seems to have been an underlying theme in many of his known paintings. A medieval, court-jester type of fool only appears in those paintings estimated to have been executed in his youth and early maturity.²⁶ His later works deal with folly by means of a more complex system of metaphors and allusions, in many ways reflecting the concept of universal folly proposed by the *devotio moderna*.²⁷

Looking at Bosch's painting of a toddling child with a windmill in light of his background, well within the orbit of the Brotherhood of the Common Life, and in view of Erasmus's emerging discussions of the equivalence of childhood and folly, it seems plausible that Bosch's playing infant was intended

to convey the *devotio moderna's* doctrine of divine folly, expounded by Thomas à Kempis and Nicholas Cusanus. Iconographically, the windmill, or whirligig, was used as an attribute of folly in various contexts from the fifteenth century onwards. It was eventually employed by Ripa for that purpose at the end of the sixteenth century: in his *Iconologia* he placed a windmill in the hands of both Folly and *Pazzia*, an attribute intended to denote both childishness and the irrationality of a mind "blown by the wind" (Fig. 103). In general, it would seem to be out of place in a religious panel; but, by relating Bosch's child with a whirligig to the philosophy of the *devotio moderna*, the apparent incongruity may be accounted for in this particular case.

Bosch, however, was not the only northern artist to use this motif in religious art: his contemporary, Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), for example, included several playing, winged infants, some carrying windmills, in two of his religious woodcuts. Both prints are part of a set of illustrations for the story of the Life of the Virgin, for an edition published in book form in 1511. They are estimated to have been designed several years earlier: *Virgin Worshipped by Angels and Saints* (Fig. 104) around 1497-1500 and *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (Fig. 105) around 1504. This was after Dürer is thought to have visited Italy for the first time, in 1495, and the *putti* reflect classical, Italianate influences.²⁸ Under the guidance of his German friends as well as his Italian associates, he had begun to study humanist literature and to develop the intellectual side of his art. He became a learned humanist who admired, and

eventually met, Erasmus. Hence, his religious works may also reflect a Christian Humanist viewpoint: his playing *putti*, like Bosch's child with a windmill, may similarly have been intended to be a reference to divine folly and childish naivety, without the perjorative connotations associated with the folly of the Old Testament, enabling a reconciliation of his Christian Humanism with the Italianate classical form that he admired.

Similar playing *putti* were not unusual even in late fifteenth-century European religious art. Some are cited by Gibson in his assessment of Bosch's Boy with a Whirligig: an embroidered altar cloth of the Virgin Enthroned (Spanish School), shows *putti* balancing with windmills as they use the arms of the throne as tightropes;²⁹ a Dutch choir stall, where two *putti* joust with windmills;³⁰ and an Epiphany scene by Joos van Cleve, where playing *putti* form a relief decorating the Virgin's throne.³¹ No-one has successfully accounted for the inclusion of this apparently secular imagery in such religious contexts. The influence of the *devotio moderna*, however, was spreading during the fifteenth century: to the Rhineland, to Northern France and even to Spain. Thus, it is possible that all of these images make reference to the divine folly of Christ within a Christian Humanist frame of reference.³²

Of greater interest in the context of this study, though, whose main concern is Jocus, are the playing *putti* representing folly that appear in a secular rather than a religious context in Northern European art. They begin to be evident in the first two decades of the sixteenth century, notably in the work

of followers and admirers of Dürer. The following chapter, therefore, examines the role of the playing *putto* within the contexts of a selection of secular northern works of art.

CHAPTER V:2

THE PLAYING *PUTTO* IN NORTHERN EUROPEAN ART

With the spread of humanism throughout Northern Europe there was an accompanying interest in classicism amongst artists outside Italy, notably in the increasing use of classical motifs. Under such classical influence, Venus and Cupid became a popular subject for Northern European painters by the second decade of the sixteenth century. Classicising *putti*, other than Cupid, also began to be utilised in a variety of secular works of art. Some of these are especially interesting in terms of this study, because, like Jocus, they feature either as a companion of Cupid or of a nude woman resembling Venus. They are found in a number of different, yet related, contexts. To determine the possible role of such *putti* in the northern repertoire of images, therefore, and to assess any parallels that may exist between these and the *putti* in the Italian works discussed above, a group of works from north of the Alps has been selected for examination.

The *kleinmeister* Albrecht Altdorfer (c.1480-1538), an admirer of Dürer, made several very small prints of a nude woman, usually identifiable as Venus, accompanied by two *putti*.³³ The compositions are highly reminiscent of similar ones in Italian painting. Reclining Venus (Fig. 106), for example,

resembles the Sienese panels of the subject already discussed in Chapter IV.2 above, including the Brescianini painting of *Venus and Cupids* (compare Fig. 106 with Figs. 76 and 83-85). In Altdorfer's print, the winged *putto* sitting beside Venus's legs presumably represents Cupid, although he carries none of the usual attributes. The other, who stands leaning on her shoulder, holds a long stick, the function of which is difficult to determine; he is analogous to, but not specifically identifiable as, Jocus.

Another of Altdorfer's miniature prints, *Standing Venus with Two Putti* (Fig. 107), shows Venus holding a flame of passion in one hand and a cornucopia, signifying fertility, in the other; whilst two *putti* play with toys at her feet. One of the *putti* holds a stick and appears to spill a collection of small balls, like marbles, onto the ground; and the other, holding a kind of abacus, pulls suggestively at the drapery (or rather, drawers) concealing Venus's pudenda. Children at play, not identifiable as *erotes*, seem odd companions for Venus, and incongruous elements amongst references to passion (the flame) and to fertility (the cornucopia). Altdorfer may, in fact, have been utilising these infants to suggest the euphemism *ludus puerorum*, already discussed above, in order to imply sexual union, and thus to reinforce the role of Venus and its sexual message.³⁴ On the other hand, in a country that traditionally linked love with folly, and in light of Erasmus's equating of childhood and folly, the role of playing *putti* as companions of Venus may have been intended to convey the folly of love. Neither explanation is mutually exclusive, however,

and the print was possibly intended to suggest both concepts simultaneously. A print by Master C.B., Frieze with Children (1515), exemplifies the link that was understood to exist between playing children, lovemaking and folly (Fig. 108): at the left hand side a group of children play, whilst at the right a traditional Fool/Jester seduces a woman by fondling her breast, as she raises the hem of her skirt.

Altdorfer also designed a small engraving, dated 1511 and known as Fortuna on a Globe (Fig. 109). The female figure is a nude with large wings, and long flowing hair; and, apart from the wings, she resembles classicising images of Venus, especially since she is accompanied by a blindfolded Cupid, also depicted with wings, who wears a quiver and is shown attempting to mount a pair of stilts. Both figures appear to balance on a ball or globe, the woman holding-on to the arm of the unstable child. The folly of the situation is inescapable: the print conveys the futile action of Fortune, herself precariously balanced on her globe, attempting to hold Love in check as he attempts an impossible feat that is destined to cause both of them to fall.

The motif of a *putto* on stilts is not unique to Altdorfer: it was also used by Dürer in his Dream of the Idler (Fig. 110); but in Dürer's work, the *putto* carries none of the usual attributes that would identify him specifically as Cupid. As with Altdorfer's Fortuna on a Globe, the nude, depicted with long, flowing hair, resembles Venus. An apple placed on a ledge near her outstretched hand may be an oblique reference to the "Judgement of Paris", a

mythical event in which she won a golden apple for her beauty, having promised Paris the love of a beautiful woman. In choosing Venus rather than one of her rivals, Juno and Minerva, Paris was, according to classical mythology, choosing love over riches or heroism. However, if the Judgement of Paris is considered in terms of Christian moralising interpretations, the mythical allusion is more appropriate to the context of The Dream of the Idler: during medieval times Juno, Minerva and Venus came to represent the Contemplative, the Active and the Voluptuous Life respectively (Fig. 58); thus, the choice of Venus represents a rejection of the active and the contemplative in favour of the voluptuous life, and this appears to be the choice that the "Idler" is about to make. Simultaneously, in Christian terms the apple is also an attribute of Eve, and, thus, a reference to temptation and the Fall of Man, an indication that the Idler's choice is fraught with danger. The moral content of this visual message is reinforced by the presence of a little demon, who blows bellows (a symbol of folly) into the dreamer's ear. The demon is depicted above the left shoulder of Venus, thereby associating her with vice. These visual clues suggest that Venus is portrayed as a personification of Lust/Luxuria, implying that the dream of the idler is erotic in nature. The *putto* playing with a pair of stilts, struggling to mount and master them, may well allude to some unattainable sexual goal of the aging dreamer. It may also allude to the unstable folly of the idler's amorous dream, the fulfilment of which would lead to his downfall.

Another follower of Dürer, Hans Baldung Grien (c.1485-1545), painted a panel, usually called Death and the Maiden (1509-11) which includes a *putto* with a different attribute of childhood, in this case a hobbyhorse (Fig. 111).³⁵ The focus of the painting is a young, nude woman shown adjusting her long, flowing hair as she looks at herself in a hand mirror. Assisting her in holding the mirror, but partially cut off by the edge of the painting, is an older nude woman who is both haggard and almost toothless.³⁶ The aged woman uses her other hand to apparently deter the second most dominant figure in the painting: the emaciated personification of Time. He is painted holding an hourglass over the head of the young maiden whilst grasping the transparent veil which, with token modesty, is wrapped around her arm and hips. His almost skeletal figure suggests that he is also intended to represent Death. The naked *putto*, who is painted kneeling between the feet of the two women, appears to be tangled in the other end of the maiden's long veil, as if hiding under it. His hobbyhorse and a red apple lie discarded on the ground.

The painting could well have been called "*Vanitas*", since it deals with the transience of youth and beauty, as did many Northern European paintings and prints of the same period; in this case in a most explicit way. The young woman admires her own beauty, unaware of the hovering presence of Time/Death, who counts off her days and is ready, perhaps, to metaphorically unveil the pretence that such beauty is everlasting. The older woman, however, appears fully conscious of the passing of Time and of encroaching

Death. Nevertheless, she, too, tries to maintain the illusions of youth: she supports the maiden by encouraging her to admire her youthful beauty, whilst simultaneously attempting to ward off the passage of Time, pushing away his hourglass. As in Dürer's Dream of the Idler, the fallen apple at the maiden's feet suggests that she has chosen the Voluptuous Life: like Venus, she has won the apple for her beauty; but, like Eve, she has used her beauty to be a temptress, and will, thus, subsequently "fall".

What, then, can be the role of the enigmatic *putto* in this context? At first, he may be mistaken for Cupid, since the nude maiden resembles Venus; but he has none of the accepted weapons of the god of Love. Instead, his attribute is the discarded hobbyhorse, a particularly popular toy, often depicted in portrayals of children's games. He may well have been intended to represent folly in the form of childish naïvety, but he also has something in common with Italian Jocus figures, especially (because of the hobbyhorse) with that painted by Vasari in his panel of St Jerome. However, there is no evidence to suggest that this child painted by Baldung (nor those of Altdorfer and Dürer) were perceived to directly represent Jocus, despite their playful activities.

The actions of this *putto* are interesting and unusual: he seems to inadequately try to hide himself under the maiden's transparent veil; placed at her feet, his presence could signify her attempt to conceal her own folly.³⁷ However, both the *putto's* hobbyhorse and the maiden's apple have fallen to the ground, signalling that childish folly and youthful beauty are defeated by

encroaching Time and inevitable Death. Death and the Maiden is an interesting example of a gloomily moralising subject painted to make, simultaneously, an erotic display of the naked female form by contrasting the maiden's beauty with the nearby emaciated figure of Time/Death. Baldung's conjunction of a nude and a folly-figure conforms, in terms of content, with several fifteenth and sixteenth century popular prints; but in these the folly-figure is usually a court jester (Figs. 55 and 96). In terms of form, however, both the nude maiden and the playing *putto* reflect Italian classical influence, integrated into the traditionally northern motif of *Vanitas*.

An engraved design by Lucas van Leyden, who also knew and admired Dürer, seems more likely to directly represent a personification of Jocus. The print has been descriptively labelled Two cupids seated on clouds, in two circles with tendrils on a dark background 1517 (Fig. 112), but an examination of the attributes of the two *putti* identify them more precisely.¹⁸ The winged *putto* in the left circle is clearly identifiable as Cupid: he is portrayed carrying a flaming torch in one hand and an arrow in the other, and he has a quiver slung over his shoulder. The right-hand *putto*, also winged, has a cloak over his shoulder and carries a toy windmill or whirligig. Compared to the examples of "humanistic" Northern European art discussed in the previous chapter, he appears to represent Folly; but, viewed in terms of classical imagery, which is clearly emulated here, he could be also identified as Jocus, the companion of Cupid. Interestingly, however, the earliest Italian

representations of Jocus examined in this study, did not occur in artistic imagery until a decade later than this design by Lucas van Leyden.

The Horatian allusion to Cupid and Jocus was very probably already familiar amongst all of the Northern artists whose work has been discussed in this chapter. Each, at some time, belonged to the same circle of acquaintance as Conrad Celtes, the humanist whose drawing of a gemstone is labelled *VENUS, CUPIDO* and *IOCUS*. Indeed, Dürer himself designed a number of illustrative plates for the publication of Celtes' *Quatuor Libri Amorum* in which Horace's lines "*sive tu mavis Erycina riden quam Iocus circumvolat et Cupido*" are imitated. It appears highly probable that the impetus for equating classical Jocus with Christian humanism's childish folly emanated from northern artists, under the influence of Celtes and Dürer.

Bridging the gap between Northern and Italian depictions of a Jocus-like figure is an anonymous Italian print showing two *putti* which resemble those in Lucas van Leyden's engraving. They occur in an Italian wood engraving of The Death of Virginia, with an estimated date of the late fifteenth century (Fig. 113). To date, this appears to be the earliest Italian image to include a figure identifiable as Jocus. The detailed composition and narrative content of the engraving suggest that it is a copy of a now-unknown painting.³⁹ The legend of Virginia was recounted by Livy in his history of Rome (and retold by Boccaccio) telling the story of a tragedy that resulted from overpowering carnal desire.⁴⁰ The Roman consul, Appius Claudius, was obsessed with lust

for Virginia, the daughter of the Patrician Virginio; but she was already betrothed to a former tribune, Lucius Icilius. By various devious means Appius attempted to possess her, but rather than have his daughter's honour besmirched, Virginio seized a dagger and killed her with it.

The print illustrates the climactic moment of the narrative: Virginio is placed centrally, raising the dagger to kill his daughter; whilst, at the right, Appius is held in check. Apparently incongruously, the two *putti* have been placed on a hillock in the left foreground; they are engaged with one another and seem unconcerned with the tragedy being enacted behind them. Their attributes reveal that the one at the left, carrying a flaming torch, is Cupid; whilst his companion, carrying a toy whirligig and astride a hobbyhorse, appears to be a personification of Jocus. On the evidence accumulated throughout this study, Cupid and Jocus symbolise sexuality and the folly of carnal desire. Thus, in the context of the story of Virginia they act as a strong visual reminder of the reason for the sacrifice of Virginia's life: namely, the foolish lust of Appius Claudius.

The estimated date of this print as the late fifteenth century accords with the visual evidence: the print, with its attention to military detail and portrayal of stern faces, is reminiscent of the paintings by Andrea Mantegna (c.1431-1506) that relate to Roman relief sculpture. This engraving seems to be the earliest known depiction of Jocus in Western European art (if it does, indeed, predate the gemstone drawing by Celtes). It is significant in this context that

Dürer probably visited Northern Italy around 1495 (and again 1505-1507) and became an admirer of Mantegna's work, as well as that of Mantegna's brother-in-law, Giovanni Bellini, whose work has already been examined above in Chapter III:4 in relation to his use of the playing *putto*.

Further, it was Dürer's circle of followers in the Rhine valley and Northern Europe that, during the subsequent decade, seem to have developed the image of a playing child very much like Jocus, as a personification of Folly; and from the same region a further acquaintance of Dürer, Conrad Celtes, brought the Horatian allusion of Venus with Cupid and Jocus, to the attention of his circle both in his *Quatuor Libri Amorum*, printed in Nuremberg in 1502 and in his drawing of a gemstone in which he inscribed names above the figures: *VENUS*, *CUPIDO* and *IOCUS*. It is certainly a great coincidence. In light of this cumulative circumstantial evidence we can be reasonably confident that cross-cultural interaction played a part in giving impetus to the development of a new motif in the visual repertoire of images: a playing *putto* of classical precedent signifying both human folly and lust, which, during the following decades, became specifically identifiable as Jocus.

SUMMARY OF PART FIVE

The personification of folly, depicted as a Fool, gained enormous popularity north of the Alps during the Late Middle Ages; and the most prevalent iconographic role for the Fool was as an allusion to the folly of love. This was a role well understood by the general populace since it derived from a well-established carnival tradition that had probably evolved out of ancient fertility rituals. The *Fastnachtspiele* carnival plays invariably included the Fool and frequently had a plot that was based on the sexual exploits of the main protagonists. Graphic artists, in search of new secular subject matter, began to use these plays as sources of visual imagery, particularly on single-leaf woodcuts of the sixteenth century. However, the Fool had earlier made his appearance in scenes of love, namely in fifteenth-century prints of the Love Garden theme; and perhaps the earliest identifiable artist to utilise the Fool in this context was Master E.S.

Already, in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the courtly Garden of Love had become one of the most frequently represented secular subjects, appearing in paintings, marriage chests and tapestries. By the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the subject was utilised in the cheaper and more accessible art of popular prints. Perhaps surprisingly, the image of the court fool in the presence of lovers seems rarely to have extended to Italy. There,

only occasional copies of Northern prints incorporate the jester type of fool figure, and judging by the few extant prints of these, a comparable taste for the subject did not prevail.

This brief overview of the historic development of the fool's association with sexual pursuit shows that his role was to emphasise human folly in amorous circumstances: his presence indirectly alludes to wiser and more prudent behaviour. In the visual arts, the popularity of such images was closely associated with the success of moralising "fool literature" intended to mirror the folly of human behaviour: integral to the literary genre of the *speculum stultorum*, which reached its zenith of popularity toward the end of the fifteenth century, were the accompanying woodcut illustrations. The genre reflects a lingering Medieval attitude towards folly with its roots in Old Testament dogma.

Erasmus's Praise of Folly was a turning point in fool literature, revealing a humanistic attitude with more tolerance and light humour; and the many classical allusions expose the extent to which classical learning was permeating scholarship in Northern Europe. In terms of religion, the Christian humanism that informed Erasmus's work derived from Pauline doctrine; the New Testament rather than the Old. Most interesting for this study was his return to an examination of Greek manuscripts rather than a reliance on the early Latin translations of the Church Fathers: from his studies he found that the child and the fool are seen to be synonymous in Greek language. In terms of the visual

arts, this revised interpretation of folly as childish naïvety provides a probable reason for the emergence of childhood toys as new attributes of folly.

In Northern European art, however, the established iconographic tradition of representing lustful folly as a court jester was both popular and deep-rooted. Thus, despite the new humanistic attitude which was emerging and which is reflected in the work of Erasmus, a general iconographic change in the personification of folly was quite limited during the sixteenth century. It seems to have occurred first in the religious works of those artists influenced by Erasmus and the Christian humanism of the *devotio moderna*. The works of Bosch and Dürer are striking examples. In secular art the change is also apparent during the first two decades of the sixteenth century, notably in the works of the classically-inspired artists belonging to Dürer's circle of influence.

The advent of a playing *putto* as a new kind of personification of folly north of the Alps, together with the introduction into Italian art of the Jocus figure carrying similar attributes, suggests a cross-fertilisation of ideas between north and south. Such exchanges would have been facilitated by travelling artists and scholars, of which Dürer and Celtes are prime examples. The impetus to represent folly in a new, classically derived manner, namely as a playing *putto*, occurred in an intellectual climate of enthusiastic re-examination of classical texts and artifacts, and gives credibility to the assumption that iconographic change relates, at least in part, to changes in social, religious and intellectual mores. This is especially the case where no

strong iconographic tradition already exists; and this was certainly the situation for Italian artists with regard to the subject of the folly of love.

A scrupulous and exhaustive examination of Northern humanists and artists involved in the changes in visual personifications of folly, is beyond the scope of this dissertation; but this introduction to associated artistic works, and their links with Italian art, serve to set this study of the personification Jocus in a wider European context.

CONCLUSION

The long history of the personification of Jocus is consistent with the prevailing view (articulated by such scholars as Seznec in Survival of the Pagan Gods, and Panofsky in Renaissance and Renascences) that figures created in classical antiquity never really disappeared, but were transformed and absorbed into the medieval repertoire of images; to re-emerge more or less restored to their classical form during the Renaissance. This study demonstrates that this crucial iconographic development occurred not only in the case of the well-known Olympian gods, but also in the case of the now-obscure quasi-god, Jocus, whose identity was originally created for literary purposes. As a conclusion to this study, it is appropriate to reiterate that which has been discovered about this personification: his purpose, his survival, his brief resurgence and his subsequent decline from within art.

In classical culture, Jocus was one of several personifications of abstract nouns apparently created by Plautus for his plays, and used to give substance to the intangible feelings of his characters: personifications which convey a sense of vitality, an emotional community of imaginary figures. Jocus was named in connection with happy times and feelings of well-being, particularly in the realm of love; and, subsequently, it has been in the context of works of art and literature expressing themes of love and carnal desire where Jocus has been

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used to greatest and most enduring effect. The extant evidence suggests that Horace was the poet who selected Jocus from the large entourage of Venus and gave this figure parity with Cupid as a favoured acolyte of the goddess of Love. Horace thereby created a Roman parallel to Hesiod's early Greek triad of Aphrodite with her attendants Eros and Himeros.

It is at this point that we become involved with a fundamental issue pertaining to this study: why was an association perceived to exist between a personification of play (named Jocus) and the gods of love, so that Jocus and Himeros (the personification of Amorous Desire) might be considered to be compatible figures? The answer is not immediately obvious to modern consciousness; at least, not from the etymology of the English language. It has, however, been demonstrated here that the synonymous terms "*iocus*" and "*ludus*", which frequently occur in Roman love poems and bawdy verses, were not used merely to convey lighthearted fun and games; rather, they were used euphemistically to describe lustful, sexual play, "*turpi et lascivo*". The literary appeal of a personification called Jocus is thus seen to relate to popular figurative language and sexual innuendo during the classical era. This study has shown the erotic interpretation to be of critical importance, not only to the initial appeal of the motif, but also to the subsequent survival of the personification of Jocus.

With the advent of Christianity, when many of the pagan gods were transformed into moral allegories, writers continued to find a place for Jocus in

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literature. Predictably, however, in view of his sexual associations, he was now identified on the side of the vices. Prudentius, in his *Psychomachia*, like Plautus some six hundred years earlier, included him amongst a string of other personifications of abstract nouns concerning love and desire; in this case in the entourage of the vice *Luxuria* 'Lust'. Significantly, the description of Jocus was immediately followed by that of Cupid; and, when the text came to be illustrated, their visual images consistently appeared consecutive or adjacent to one another. Thus, the connection between these two figures, first specified by Horace, was reinforced.

The medieval source that most strongly reaffirms the Horatian Venus-Cupid-Jocus triad, however, is the anonymous French *Ovide Moralisé*. There, Cupid and Jocus are described as twin sons of Venus, sired by her brother, Jupiter. In this context their already immoral status is compounded: they are portrayed as offspring conceived not only through the vice of lust, but also through the "heinous sin" of incest. In addition, the moralising medieval mind attributed a further characteristic to Cupid and Jocus (particularly Jocus), namely, that of folly; and specifically, the folly intrinsic to human sexual behaviour.

In the Renaissance period, no contemporaneous literary text seems to have been uniquely responsible for bringing the image of Jocus to the attention

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of artists or patrons. Such artists and patrons usually derived their knowledge of the ancient gods through the mediation of various medieval texts, including the influential Genealogy of the Gods by Boccaccio, who was himself reliant on the work of earlier scholars. He used several early Christian sources and, most particularly, the twelfth-century Images of the Gods by Albricus. These medieval texts, that described the ancient gods, continued to be reproduced well into the first half of the sixteenth century, but neither Albricus nor Boccaccio had included the figure of Jocus in their works.

Despite the continuing circulation of popular medieval texts that did include Jocus, namely, Prudentius's Psychomachia, Martianus Capella's Marriage of Mercury and Philology and the Ovide Moralisé, the figure of Jocus does not seem to have provoked any further significant interest until the early sixteenth century. However, from the late fifteenth century onwards there was a pronounced increase in the popularity of the rediscovered and newly-published works of Horace, particularly his Odes; and, significantly, this corresponds to the emergence of the Jocus figure in art.

The attempt to give visual form to Jocus is especially curious since it appears first to have occurred in Germany rather than Italy: Conrad Celtes not only imitated Horace's lines ("*Sive tu mavis Erycina ridens / quam locus circumvolat et Cupido*") in his own verse; but he also chose to identify three figures carved on an antique gemstone as the same Horatian triad. Although Celtes' identification of the figures as Venus, Cupid and Jocus is undoubtedly

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fanciful, in relation to Jocus it is most revealing. Celtes identified Jocus as a Fool's *marotte*, suggesting that he understood this personification to be a form of jester. The implication is that the noun "*iocus*", which can be translated in a variety of ways, primarily conveyed "joke" or "jest" to Celtes; in other words, a figure of comedy. Further, Celtes probably saw Jocus as a personification of Folly, consistent with the well-established tradition of jesters in German and Netherlandish art, with which he would have been familiar. It seems that Celtes was operating without any visual precedent on which to base his recognition of Jocus, possibly signifying that he was unfamiliar with any of the illustrated versions of the *Psychomachia*, and that he was not guided by the textual description of Prudentius which attributed the sistrum and cymbals to Jocus.

In contrast, the selected group of artists of Tuscany, painting in the middle decades of the sixteenth century, do seem to have utilised the text (and perhaps the illustrations) of the *Psychomachia* in developing their images of Jocus: the personification is invariably shown bearing a rattle or other noise-making device, as Prudentius describes. The redeveloped Renaissance figures were given a classical form, akin to that of Cupid: in the paintings of the Brescianini, Vasari and Bronzino, Jocus is portrayed as a playing *putto*. This infant-like image is particularly significant. It has been found, on the one hand, that the term *ludus puerorum*, 'child's play', was a contemporaneous euphemism for sexual congress. On the other hand, in vernacular Italian, *iocus*

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translates as *giuoco*, which, when used in conjunction with *amore*, makes the term "*giuoco d'amore*", yet another euphemism for coitus that was popular in the sixteenth century. Thus, the figure of Jocus, depicted in painting as a playing child and companion of Cupid/Amor, would inevitably have evoked these popular figurative terms for sex, and, indeed, must have been intended to do so.

The German and the Italian images of Jocus seem to suggest two distinct cultural responses relating to the different traditional concerns of two societies: one focussed primarily on folly, and the other on amorousness. Nevertheless, both the German and the Italian interpretations seem to recognise the dual nature of Jocus. Celtes, after all, imitated Horace's literary imagery in one of his amorous poems; and the *marotte* he labelled "*IOCUS*" in his gemstone drawing is held by "*CUPIDO*" in a relatively phallic position. The Tuscan artists, on the other hand, whilst emphasising his sexual role, gave Jocus attributes that hinted at folly: all used bells, for example, which are traditionally associated with the jester. When Erasmus, in his published writings, began to emphasise the correlation between folly and childhood, soon after Celtes drew his gemstone, images of folly as a playing child began to appear in Northern art. It may be that this, too, contributed to Jocus acquiring attributes of folly. The diverse images of Jocus demonstrate that, where no defined and consistent portrayal exists from antiquity, the re-emergence of the figure depends for its form on the cultural preconceptions and the

predispositions of the artists: thus, Tuscan interpretations of Jocus are classical in form, closely resembling Cupid; whilst the image named as Jocus by Conrad Celtes is decidedly Germanic and unclassical, despite his avid interest in classical humanism.

Why then did Cartari, an Italian, use Celtes' German imagery to illustrate the text of his *Genealogiae*, rather than the later, more classical images developed in Tuscany in mid century? The answer, undoubtedly, lies in accessibility: Celtes gemstone drawing had been reproduced, published, and, therefore, well-circulated in Apianus's *Inscriptiones* (1534), whilst the Tuscan paintings, all in personal collections and, presumably, displayed in private rather than public apartments, will have been subject to very limited access which will have severely restricted dissemination of the imagery.

The earliest sixteenth century mythographies, such as Georg Pictor's *Mythological Theology* (1532) and Lilio Gregorio Giraldi's *History of the Gods* (1548) do not mention Jocus. Indeed, he is only named in mythographies published after 1565. That was the year when, exceptionally, one Tuscan interpretation of Jocus (though not the Horatian triad itself) was open to public view: namely, Bronzino's design for the Hymen monument (of which the figure of Jocus formed a part) for the *apparato* for the wedding of Francesco de' Medici to Giovanna of Austria. Unfortunately, we have no visual record of that image, but it may well be significant that it was in the year after this wedding celebration that Cartari first included a textual description of

"*Giuoco*" in his *Imagini*, together with the illustration derived from the Apianus woodcut of Celtes's drawing, neither of which had previously appeared in the *editio princeps* of 1556. We know that descriptions of the *apparato* were sent to other cities in letters to those who did not themselves attend the nuptial celebrations, and, if Jocus had proved an interesting figure, this may have encouraged Cartari to return to the most accessible source of imagery for his own illustration. Whatever his motivation to include Jocus, his example was imitated by others during the following century, only to disappear by the eighteenth century.

It is, perhaps, surprising, given that the Horatian triad was popular in the literary and visual imagery of so many printed texts, that only one painting has come to light that utilises Celtes frequently-printed gemstone image of Jocus; and also that there are not more surviving paintings that have been based on the Horatian triad. Echoes of Jocus, however, lingered in the new personification of Folly that replaced the medieval court jester in art throughout western Europe: from the late sixteenth into the eighteenth centuries, images of a playing *putto* carrying a whirligig, and sometimes riding a hobbyhorse, can be found frolicking amongst lovers, especially in rococo decorative schemes. It is as if the legacy of Jocus was to purge Love's Folly of all medieval moralising overtones and to revive the antique sense of comedy and playfulness from which Plautus invented him.

APPENDIX I

HORACE'S "ODE TO AUGUSTUS" (ODES I, ii)

*Iam satis terris nivis atque dirae
grandinis misit Pater et rubente
dextera sacras iaculatus arces
terrui urbem,*

*terrui gentis, grave ne rediret
saeculum Pyrrhae nova monstra questae,
omne cum Proteus pecus egit altos
visere montis,*

*piscium et summa genus haesit ulmo
nota quae sedes fuerat columbis,
et superiecto pavae natarunt
aequore dammae.*

*vidimus flavum Tiberum retortis
litore Etrusco violenter undis
ire deiectum monumenta regis
templaque Vestae,*

*Iliae dum se nimium querenti
iactat ultorem, vagus et sinistra
labitur ripa Iove non probante u-
xorius amnis.*

*audiet civis acuisse ferrum
quo graves Persae melius perirent,
audiet pugnas vitio parentum
rara iuventus.*

*quem vocet divum populus ruentis
imperi rebus? prece qua fatigent
virgines sanctae minus audientem
carmina Vestam?*

*cui partis scelus expiandi
Iuppiter? tandem venias precamur
nube candentis umeros amictus,
augur Apollo;*

*sive tu mavis, Erycina ridens,
quam Iocus circumvolat et Cupido;
sive neglectum genus et nepotes
respicis auctor,*

*heu nimis longo satiate ludo
quem iuvat clamor galeaeque leves
acer et Mauri peditis cruentum
vultus in hostem;*

*sive mutata iuvenem figura
ales in terris imitatis almae
filius Maiae patiens vocari
Caesaris ultor:*

*serus in caelum redeas diuque
laetus intersis populo Quirini,
neve te nostris vitiis iniquum
ocior aura*

*tollat; hic magnos potius triumphos,
hic ames dici pater atque princeps,
neu sinas Medos equitare inultos
te dice, Caesae.*

APPENDIX II

AN EXTRACT FROM THE POEM *OVIDE MORALISÉ* DESCRIBING VENUS, CUPID AND JOCUS

(I, vi, lines 656-680)

*Venus, la mère au dieu d'amours,
Fu de cele amour conceüe.
Tant a puis Jupiter veüe
Sa fille bele et agreable,
Qu'il l'ama, puis, selonc la fable,
Tant li plot, tant li abeli,
Qu'il se vault couchier avuec li:
De cele acointance qu'il firent
Jocus et Cupido nasquirent.
Cil et Venus ont la baillie
De destraindre ami et amie
Et de mener a lor bandon,
Venus tient et porte un brandon,
Et Cupido l'arc et la floiche
Que pour les amans poindre encoiche:
Venus art et Cupido point.
Jocus et Cupido sont point
Au pointures nu, sans veüe
Quar fole amours et jex desnue
Les musars de robe et d'avoir,
D'entendement et de savoir,
D'onner et bones vertus:
Pour ce sont il paint desvestus,
Et pour ce sont il paint avugle
Qu'amours et jex mains folz avugle.*

ii]

EXTRACT FROM THE *OVIDE MORALISÉ EN PROSE*

DESCRIBING VENUS, CUPID AND JOCUS

... d'iceulx genitoires et de l'escume de la mer nasquit la grant Venus. dont Jupiter fut amoureux, si de leur amour fut conceüe Venus, la mère au dieu d'amour, laquelle crut et devint si belle et gente que icelluy mesmes Jupiter s'en amoura et coucha o elle, si furent engenderez Jocus et Cupido, qui depuis ont eu les offices d'enamourer les hommes et femmes les ungs des autres. Et pour ce faire porte Venus ung brandon enflamé, et Cupido porte l'arc et la flesche. Ainsi Venus art et Cupido point et Jocus dejouer les tempte pour parvenir à leur entente de folle amour, qui moult de gens amuse à y perdre et corps et ames, honneurs et biens, sens et temps et vertuz et entendemens. Et pour ce sont ilz paintz nudz et aveugles.

APPENDIX III

List and Descriptions of the Surviving Manuscript Illustrations of Jocus from Prudentius's *Psychomachia*

The sixteen extant illustrated manuscripts of Prudentius's *Psychomachia* were produced in *scriptoria* often great distances apart. The oldest was produced during the ninth century and the most recent is dated 1298. All are fully reproduced in Richard Stettiner, *Die Illustrierten Prudentius handschriften* (Berlin, 1895-1905). Stettiner's study was checked and amplified with descriptions by Helen Woodruff in *The Illustrated Manuscripts of Prudentius* (Cambridge, Mass., 1930). Woodruff followed Stettiner's code to refer to each manuscript, and the same convention has been adopted for this dissertation.

Woodruff also divided the manuscripts into two groups according to their attributed places of origin: she called the French and Anglo-Saxon manuscripts Group I; and those from the Rhine and Meuse valleys, Group II. Only twelve of the manuscripts have surviving illustrations of Jocus; and these are listed below. These twelve have been divided into three groups in this dissertation; the division in this case is entirely according to the manner in which they illustrate Jocus.

The list below gives the key to Stettiner's coding of the manuscripts, as well as brief descriptions of the images of Jocus. In appropriate cases a general description of the manuscript is also given, based on Woodruff.

GROUP A: Almost all of the illustrations of Jocus in this group are labelled: "*IOCUS CYMBALA PROICIENS FUGIT*," and line framing, which is thought by Woodruff to indicate the antiquity of the archetype, occurs to some extent in all the manuscripts. Jocus is depicted as a running figure who turns his head to look behind him. He is clothed in a short tunic and cloak, with a drum-like rattle or toy drawn in the space behind him, as if it is being dropped. Cupid/Amor is similarly depicted, but he is shown as a naked and winged figure, with his right arm outstretched towards his bow and quiver of arrows.

Le1 Leyden University Library, Codices Vossiani Lat.Oct.15,
9thC, French (Limoges or St.Éparque in Angoulême); 15 x 21 cm.
(Stettiner, pp. 11-16, Pl. 22)

Singularly, all illustrations in this, the earliest extant manuscript of the '*Psychomachia*', are separated from the text and placed together in full page illustrations (fols. 37-43). The margins of the text contain title inscriptions

where the illustrations would usually inserted. These titles, crudely written, often differ from those accompanying the drawings. The figures, including Jocus, are sketchily and roughly executed, but are considered, according to Woodruff, to closely follow the prototype model. Scenes are crowded onto the page, usually separated by lines drawn between them, and, sometimes, across the bottom of the pictures, thus, in effect, attempting to "frame" the illustrations. The page that shows the illustration of Jocus, however, has few such framing lines. Jocus is illustrated side-by-side with Cupid/Amor.

- P1. Paris, Bibliotheque National, MS.lat. 8318,
10thC, French (Tours?); 17.5 x 21.5 cm., fol. 58r
(Stettiner, pp. 3-10, Pl. 4^a).

According to Woodruff, this manuscript is considered important as the reconstruction closest to the archetype, preserving the antique style best. The illustrations in this and all the remaining manuscripts are set within the text. The image of Jocus is framed by lines on three sides, with a double line at the bottom; although, in common with other illustrations in this manuscript, his feet are drawn beyond the frame. Visually, this device conveys a three-dimensional illusion, almost as if the figures are on a stage.

- C. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. No.23.
11thC, Anglo-Saxon from Abbey of Malmesbury; 28.5 x 36 cm., fol. 24r
(Stettiner, pp. 17-22, Pl. 59¹).

The drawings of the figures in this manuscript are in black, red and green, completely framed by double parallel lines. Some of the drawings penetrate the internal lines of the frames. Jocus is drawn standing on extremely uneven ground. Flowers have been drawn near to the feet of Cupid.

- Lo1 London, British Library, Additional MS. No.24199
11thC; Anglo-Saxon (Bury St.Edmunds?); 23.5 x 31.5 cm., fol. 21r
(Stettiner, pp. 23-27, Pl. 60¹⁰)

This manuscript is heavily glossed. The illustrations are line drawings in red, green, violet, blue and light brown. At least three hands have been distinguished in the overdrawing. The illustrations are completely framed with a border of double parallel lines, and the figures again penetrate the internal lines of the frame. The illustration of Jocus is unfinished: it is an uncoloured brown line drawing lacking the usual labelling. No ground has been drawn beneath the feet of either Jocus or Cupid/Amor.

- Lo2 London, British Library, Cotton MS. Cleopatra C.VIII.
11thC (1st half); Anglo-Saxon; 12.5 x 20.5 cm., fol. 19r
(Stettiner, pp. 28-31, Pl. 60¹⁶. Amor on p. 43).

This manuscript is illustrated with line drawings mainly in black and red, and occasionally green; one is in blue. Two hands are distinguishable. Jocus stands on uneven ground from which a single flower grows.

GROUP B: There are four manuscripts in this group, linked together because each illustration of Jocus shows three figures rather than one. Unlike Group I, the illustrations in this group of manuscripts are not framed by lines, These manuscripts in this group have virtually identical illustrations of both Jocus and Cupid:

Le2 Leyden, University Library, Codex Burmannorum Q.3.
Late 9thC; Northern French (School of Rheims); 15.5 x 24.8 cm.,
fol.135v
(Stettiner, pp. 33-37, Pl. 97³.)

B1 Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, MS. 9987-9991.
10thC; Northern French or Belgian; 16 x 24 cm., fol. 112v.
(Stettiner, pp. 43-46, Pl. 97⁷.)

V Valenciennes, Bibliothèque Publique, MS. 563.
Early 11thC; French (Monastery of St.Amand); 20 x 28.5 cm., fol.22r.
(Stettiner, pp. 47-51, Pl. 98¹.)

In each of these manuscripts, Jocus, dressed in a short tunic, is drawn the largest, with both arms outstretched, as if in surrender, and a cluster of musical instruments fill the space behind him, including a rattle. Rough, uneven ground has been drawn under the feet of all three figures. The two unidentified figures are similarly dressed, in short tunics; one holds another rattle, the other a horn. There is virtually no variation between the drawings. This is also true of the drawings of Cupid: in each case he is shown as a winged but clothed figure, both arms outstretched, with bow, arrows and quiver filling the space behind him.

P2 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. lat. 8085.
Late 9thC; French (Amiens?); 21 x 27 cm., fol. 63r.
(Stettiner, pp. 38-42, Pl. 98¹⁰.)

The illustration of Jocus in this version is only a slight variation from those drawn in Le2, B1 and V: the dominant figure has no attributes associated directly with him; but his companions are drawn walking away, one carrying a rattle and the other a horn.

Group C: The remaining manuscripts each have an illustration of Jocus that is unique:

Ly Lyons, Bibliothèque du Palais des Arts, MS. 22,
11thC; French; 16 x 24 cm., fol. 17r
(Stettiner, pp. 55-60, Pl.116³.)

The illuminator of this manuscript consistently elaborated on the usual iconography, adding both figures and attributes. The image representing Jocus

shows three men in short tunics and high boots. The figure that apparently represents Jocus is surrounded by a variety of strewn objects: musical instruments, arrows, a sheathed sword and some streamers. His companions, similarly dressed, have no objects in their hands. One of them is a most unusual bearded man with a distended belly, which he grasps with one hand. He appears to be fleeing from the other two who gesticulate to him. This activity cannot be successfully accounted for in Prudentius's narrative. The illustration of Cupid/Amor is also untypical: he is shown clothed and flying horizontally.

- B3** Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, Ms. No.9968-72.
 11thC; Belgian (Abbey of St.Lawrence, Liège?); 20 x 26 cm., fol. 97r.
 (Stettiner, pp. 123-130, Pl. 186¹⁰.)

The hands of four different illuminators have been identified in this manuscript. One of the illuminators drew all his vices naked, and Jocus is one of these. He is drawn without companions, in a running position with an array of bells and a striking hammer filling the space behind. Amor is depicted in the usual manner, naked, running, and leaving his bow, quiver and arrows behind. He also appears to have flames drawn round his head: this style of figure is typical of another of the four illustrators of this manuscript.

- P4** Paris Bibliotheque Nationale, MS. lat. 15158.
 Dated 1298; French Gothic (Abbey St Victor, Paris); 13 x 20 cm.,
 fol.48v.
 (Stettiner, pp. 144-8, Pl. 197.)

The manuscript is liberally glossed above most of the lines, and in long marginal glosses. Interestingly, all the virtues in it are depicted as nuns, many with haloes. Jocus is drawn without companions, wearing a long tunic, belted at the waist and buttoned at the neck. Both arms are outstretched and he drops a pair of cymbals that are joined to one another by a cord. Amor is, as usual, naked with outstretched arms and fallen weapons behind.

NOTES

NOTES PART ONE

Chapter I:1

¹ The description of *Gi[u]oco* was introduced into editions of Cartari's *Imagini* from 1571 onwards (e.g. Venice, 1571, p. 539). Later editions also provide annotations: Padua, 1615 is annotated by Lorenzo Pignoria (p. 576) who states: "*Et questo disegno di Gioia è posto non solamente dall' Appiano ma da Gio. Maria Mattio ancora nel Lib. 3 delle Opinioni, & dal Ramirez sopra Martiale. La figura poi, ch' è intitolata IOCUS io l' ho veduta espressa in qualche altro taglio antico.*" These citations indicate a period of wide dissemination of the motif during the seventeenth century that is further examined below pp. 40-42. (Re translations in this dissertation: where appropriate, English translations are given only for foreign quotations that occur in the body of the text. In some cases the sense of the passages quoted is better conveyed by paraphrasing, particularly when euphemistic language has been used.)

² Horace's *Carmina* (I, ii), known as *Ode to Augustus*, is cited in full in Appendix I.

³ '*Mercator*' (V, ii, 846), in *Plautus*, 5 volumes, with translation by Paul Nixon, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1926), III, 94. The translation given in the text is my own modification of Nixon's, using what I believe to be more appropriate, sometimes figurative language.

⁴ '*Bacchides*' (I, ii, 116), in Nixon, *Plautus*, I, 342. The translation given in the text is again my own modification based on that of Nixon.

⁵ On Roman personification see Georges Dumézil, *La Religion romaine archaïque*, III (1974), 397-406.

⁶ "*Tum autem res ipsa in qua vis inest maior aliqua sic appellatur ut ea ipsa nominetur deus . . . Quo ex genere Cupidinis et Voluptatis et Lubentinae Veneris vocabula consecrata sunt, vitiosarum rerum neque naturalium . . . sed tamen ea ipsa vitia natura.*" (In other cases some exceptionally potent force is itself designated by the title divinity . . . In the same class the names of Desire, Pleasure and Venus Lubentina have been deified, things vicious and unnatural . . .

. yet the urge of these vices often overpowers natural instinct): "*De natura deorum*" (II, xxiii), in *Cicero: De Natura Deorum and Academica*, with translation by H. Rackman, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1933), pp. 180-183.

⁷ John Barsby's introduction and commentary to *Bacchides* (Warminster; Aris and Phillips Ltd., 1986) is a useful source of recent bibliographic detail and comment.

⁸ '*Noctes Atticae*' (I, xxiv): "*Epigramma Plauti M. Varrone positum esset in libro De Poetis primo*"; in *The Attic Nights of Aulus Gellius* with translation by John Rolfe, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1927), pp. 110-11. Gellius also noted that, had Varus himself not quoted the epitaph, one might have been inclined to question its authenticity.

⁹ Horace, '*Ars poetica*' (55), in *Horace: Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*, with translation by H. Rushton Fairclough, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1926), pp. 451-489. The '*Ars Poetica*' is a letter, addressed to Piso and his two sons, in which Horace gave them his opinion on the writing of poetry.

¹⁰ Horace, '*Ars Poetica*' (46), in Fairclough, *Horace*, pp. 455-56.

¹¹ This opinion was amplified in a further letter which Horace wrote to his emperor, Augustus: it takes the form of a defense of the current poetry of the Augustan era, and hence criticises the taste of that earlier age of Plautus: Horace, '*Epistles*' (II, i, 57), in Fairclough, *Horace*, pp. 400-405.

¹² Hesiod, '*Theogony*' (201), in *Hesiod, The Homeric Hymns and Homeric* with translation by Hugh G. Evelyn-White (London; William Heinemann, 1914), p. 95. The birthplace of Himeros is named in line 64 (p. 83): "... in Pieria ... beside them [the Nine Muses] the Graces and Himeros live in delight."

¹³ On Eros and Himeros, see the commentary of F. A. Paley in *The Epics of Hesiod* (London; 1883), pp. 180n and 196n: he indicates that it was a later mythology which made Eros the son of Aphrodite rather than her attendant. The commentary of M. L. West in *Hesiod: Theogony* (Oxford; 1966), pp. 177n and 224n notes that Himeros belongs to the entourage of Aphrodite as naturally as Eros. West, however, does not interpret line 64 to mean that Himeros was born at Pieria, but merely that he lived there with the Charities, next door to the Muses. In English translations from the Greek "*Himeros*" is variously named "Desire", "Cupid" or "Love"; however, an eighteenth-century Latin translation, *Anacreontis Teii carmina*, (London, 1742), p.164-65, by an unknown translator, calls *Himeros* Jocus.

¹⁴ On images of Himeros and/or Eros on Greek pottery see P. E. Arias and M. Hirmer, A History of Greek Vase Painting (London: Thames & Hudson, 1962), p. 366.

¹⁵ The Greek text is given in Pausanias' Description of Greece, I, xliii, 6, with translation by W. H. S. Jones, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1935), pp.232-235

¹⁶ 'Anacreontea' (57), in Greek Lyric II, with translation by David A. Campbell, Loeb Classical Library, (London, 1988), 237. The *Anacreontis teii carmina*, no translator given (London, 1742) p.165 translates *Epos*, and *Iuepos* into Latin as Amor and Jocus; whilst in Odes of Anacreon, translated by Thomas Moore (London: John Stockdale, Piccadilly, 1800), a note on p. 202 regarding "Jocus" states: "In the original, *Iuepos*, who was the same deity with Jocus among the Romans."

¹⁷ The Anacreontea are preserved in a tenth-century manuscript that also contains the Palatine Anthology and states: "The delightful quintet of lyric books inside this case brings works of inimitable charm, Anacreon's which the pleasant old man from Teos wrote over the wine or with the help of the Desires" (cited in Campbell, Greek Lyric, II, 4-5, and 35).

¹⁸ For a summary of current scholarship on the Anacreontea see Campbell, Greek Lyric, II, 10-20.

¹⁹ A summary of the life of Horace is given in the introduction to Michie, The Odes of Horace, pp. 11-14.

²⁰ On the influence of Anacreon on Horace, see Eduard Fraenkel, Horace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), pp. 179-180: Fraenkel cites Porphyrius as recognising the reference to Anacreon in his commentary on the Odes: "*cuius sensus sumpyus est ab Anacreonte ex libro tertio.*"

²¹ Michie, The Odes of Horace, pp. 234-235. Campbell, Greek Lyric, II, 38-9 cites Acron's notes on this passage: "*ideo lusit quia iocis et conviviis digna cantavit*" ("playful" because he wrote poems suited to merrymaking and convivial occasions). Cicero commented on the nature of Anacreon's work "*nam Anacreontis quidem tota poesis est amatoria*" (all of Anacreon's poetry is erotic): Tusculan Disputations (4, 71), with translation by J. E. King, Loeb Classical Library (London, 1971).

²² Homer, 'To Aphrodite' (17), in Evelyn-White, Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns and Homeric, p. 407.

²³ Publius Statius '*Silvae*' (I, 6), in *Statius*, with translation by J. H. Mozley, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1928), pp. 64-65.

²⁴ *Ovid's Fasti* (iv, 874-75), with translation by Sir James G. Frazer, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1931), pp. 252-253.

²⁵ See, for example, *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, VII/2/I, no editor named (Leipzig, 1956-70), 289: "*iocus = de lusu amoris*" (several literary sources are cited in the *Thesaurus* to exemplify the use of the term). Also *Totius Latinitatis Lexicon*, III, compiled by Egidio Forcellini, edited and amended by Josepho Furlanetto, Vincenti De-Vit et al. (Prato, 1865) 616: "*iocus = Pro actu turpi et lascivo*." The terms *jocus* and *ludus* are often used in this context together or interchangeably.

²⁶ Ovid, 'The Art of Love' (III, 640), in *Ovid: 'The Art of Love' and Other Poems*, with translations by J. H. Mozley, Loeb Classical Library, (London: William Heinemann, 1929), p. 162.

²⁷ Mozley, *Ovid* (III, 796), p. 174.

²⁸ *Pliny: Natural History*, with translation by H. Rackman, (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1940), III, 100-101. (This reference is cited in *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, VII, 298.) In a French edition the translation reads: "*Le chien . . . qui mit en pieces Consignis . . . parceque'elle s'ebattait trop librement avec son ami*" in *Le Plin L'Ancien 'Histoire Naturelle'*, translated by A. Ernout (Paris, 1952), VIII, 73.

²⁹ *Horatius Lexicon*, edited and annotated by Dominicus Bo (1965), p. 265, cites under "*Iocus*" several other contexts in which Horace uses the concept "*iocus*", (rather than the personification). For example, '*Carmina*', (I, xxxiii): "*...sed prius Apulis / iungentur capreae lupis, / quam turpi Pholoe peccet adultero. / sin visum Veneri, cui placet imparis / formas atque animos sub iuga aenea / saevo mittere cum ioco*." in which a sexual situation is thought funny; and '*Epistles*', (I, vi, 65f): "*Mimnermus uti censet, sine amore iocisque nil est iucundum, vivas in amore iocisque*" that refers to love play. Indeed, figurative language of this kind was common usage, according to Quintilian in '*Institutio Oratoria*' (8, vi, 24): ". . . *Vulcanum pro igne vulgo audimus, et vario Marte pugnatum eruditus est sermo, et Venerem quam coitum dixisse magis decet* . . . (. . . we often hear "Vulcan" used for fire, and to say "*vari Marte pugnatum est*" for "they fought with varying success" is elegant and idiomatic, while "Venus" is a more decent expression than *coitus* . . .), in '*The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*, III, with translation by H. E. Butler (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1966), 314-315.

³⁰ H. O. Taylor, The Classical Heritage of the Middle Ages (New York, 1901) p.49. A Late Medieval commentary on this work, discussed below pp. 28-29, indicates the effect of Martianus's book in disseminating the imagery of Jocus.

³¹ Martianus Capella (VI, 705), edited by Adolfus Dick (Leipzig, 1925) p. 351; translated by W. H. Stahl et al. in Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts, II (New York, 1977), p. 263.

³² Stahl, Martianus Capella, p.21.

³³ Stahl, Martianus Capella, p.21.

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³⁴ On linking Christian ideals with pagan imagery, see Taylor, Classical Heritage and H. Hagendahl, Latin Fathers and the Classics: a study of the Apologists, St. Jerome and other Christian writers (Goteborg, 1958).

³⁵ The development of *psychomachiae* in connection with Virtue and Vice cycles from early Christian literature is fully developed in A. Katzenellenbogen, Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art (London: Warburg Institute, 1939). See also Selma Pfeifferberger, 'The Iconology of Giotto's Virtues and Vices at Padua', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Bryn Mawr College, 1966).

³⁶ Katzenellenbogen cites 'The Shepherd of Hermas' in Simiolus, IX, 3ff.; and Funk, Opera patrum apostolicorum, I, 505ff (in Virtues and Vices, p. 5, note 3)

³⁷ Tertullian, 'De spectaculis' (xxix): "*Aspice impudicitiam deiectam a castitate, perfidiam caesam a fide, saevitiam a misericordia contusam, petulantiam a modestia adumbratam . . .*" (See impurity overthrown by chastity, perfidy slain by faith, cruelty crushed by pity, impudence thrown into the shade by modesty . . .); in Tertullian Apology and De Spectaculis with translation by T. R. Glover, Loeb Classical Library, (London: William Heinemann, 1931), pp. 294-295. On this subject see Émile Mâle, The Gothic Image: Religious Art in France of the 13th century (New York: Harper & Bros., 1958), p. 98; and Morton W. Bloomfield, The Seven Deadly Sins (Michigan, 1952), p. 51.

³⁸ Prudentius, 'Psychomachia', in Prudentius, with translation by H. J. Thomson, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1959), I, 308.

³⁹ Cupid and Amor were generally considered to be identical; however, Mario Equicola, secretary to Federico II Gonzaga of Mantua, in his *Libro de Natura de Amore* (1525), p. 59, cites various Latin authors (including Plautus and Cicero) who name Cupid and Amor separately, stating that they are not the same thing -- Curculion says that whilst Venus and Cupid command, Amor persuades; and the Grammarians say that the difference is that Cupid suggests necessity, whilst Amor suggests judgement. Equicola's own opinion was that Amor is a broad term encompassing all desires and affections; that all the things that man desires are hidden in Amor. Pseudo-Lucian, a Greek writer of the first century BC, in " " (thought by Equicola to be by Lucian himself) considered Love to be a two-fold god "who does not walk in a single track", having only one name but two characters: one with an irrational, childish mentality concerned with the yearnings of women, the other wise and a dispenser of temperate emotions; both unrestrained lust and sober affection are called Eros (for his full discussion of this issue, which also discusses the merits of homo- and heterosexual love, see *Lucian VIII*, 150-234 translated by M. D. McLeod, Loeb Classical Library (London, 1967)).

⁴⁰ The attributes of Jocus in the *Psychomachia* of Prudentius are discussed in greater detail below in Chapter II:2.

⁴¹ See Figs. 11-13, 16 and 17.

⁴² This work is commonly known as the *Anticlaudianus*. Relying entirely on internal evidence, it is dated between 1181 and 1184 by James R. Sheridan, in *Alan of Lille: Anticlaudianus or the Good and Perfect Man* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1973).

⁴³ The *Anticlaudianus* is considered by Sheridan to be a difficult text to translate with its many Latin synonyms, puns and word-plays, written, as it was, for those of Alan of Lille's twelfth century contemporaries who were fully conversant with its outlook, theories and disputes (Sheridan, *Anticlaudianus*, foreword).

⁴⁴ Sheridan, *Anticlaudianus* (VIII, 249-282), p. 199.

⁴⁵ Erwin Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art* (London: Harper and Row, 1972), p. 75 notes 1 and 2, provide a useful bibliography on the ascendancy of Ovid and the development of medieval mythography.

⁴⁶ Various manuscripts of moralised versions of Ovid have been collated and edited by C. de Boer in '*Ovide Moralisé*', *poème du commencement du quatorzième siècle publié d'après tous les manuscrits connus*. De Boer suggests that the original author was Burgundian, and that the date of the work can

probably be narrowed to between 1316 and 1328. On dating, see also Carla Lord, "Three Manuscripts of the *Ovide moralisé* ' in *Art Bulletin*, LVII (1975) 162. For a definition of "translation" in medieval terms see R. I. Lucas 'Medieval French Translations of the Latin Classics', in *Speculum*, XLV (1970), 225 and 242-244. Interestingly, the other popular moralisation of Ovid, written in Latin and attributed to Petrus Berchorius ("*De Formis Figurisque Deorum*" in *Reductorium morale*, XV, 1 [Utrecht, 1960]) makes no mention of of Jupiter's intercourse with Venus after her birth, and thus, no mention of the birth of Cupid and Jocus.

⁴⁷ See Appendix II for the full text of this passage of the *Ovide Moralisé*, I. vi, 640-680 (De Boer, *Ovide moralisé*, pp. 75-76). The story differs from Hesiod's version in the *Theogony* in which Aphrodite was born from the severed genitals of Ouranos (Uranus), a deed performed by his son Kronos (Saturn). When Kronos is defeated by his own son, Zeus (Jupiter), it appears to be by armed conflict (for more details and an explanation of these Greek myths see G. S. Kirk, *The Nature of Greek Myths* (Harmondsworth, Mddx., 1974), pp.111-118).

⁴⁸ This manuscript (Vatican, Reg. 1686), has been published as *Ovide moralisé en prose*, edited by C. de Boer (Amsterdam, 1954).

⁴⁹ C. de Boer, *Ovide moralisé en Prose*, p. 48.

⁵⁰ No paintings from the Medieval period have been found that depict Jocus and Cupid; and there are no manuscript illustrations of this particular section of the text of the *Ovide Moralisé*. Illustrating a different part of the narrative, Cupid is shown with Venus and the Graces, but without Jocus; and he is portrayed as a young, fully-clothed man in Medieval dress, usually blindfolded and winged.

⁵¹ St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologicae* (II, xlvi, 3), edited by De Rubeis *et al* (Rome, 1948), II, 251.

⁵² Eros and Himeros are discussed above, pp. 11-15.

⁵³ Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, III, xxiii, 60; (Rackman, Cicero, pp. 342-345)

⁵⁴ Ovid's *Fasti* (IV, i, 1), with translation by Sir James G. Frazer, Loeb Classical Library (London; William Heinemann Ltd, 1931), pp. 188-189. The "twin loves" are often thought to refer to Eros and Anteros, although there is no evidence at all that they are twins; indeed, stories of the birth of Anteros specifically explain that he is younger, born as a brother to Eros to help him to grow up as he seemed to remain always a child. Thereafter, when Anteros was

near, the wings of Eros enlarged and his strength increased; but when Anteros was at a distance Eros felt himself shrink. Thus Anteros represented reciprocal affection. On Eros and Anteros in art see Guy de Tervarent, "Eros and Anteros or Reciprocal Love in Ancient and Renaissance Art" in Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 28 (1965), 205-209; and in literature see Robert V. Merrill, "Eros and Anteros" in Speculum XIX (1944), 265-284.

⁵⁵ Boccaccio, Genealogia, III, xxii (Venice, 1494; reprinted New York: Garland Publishing, 1976). See also below p.32 and n.66.

⁵⁶ Dante Alighieri, The Divine Comedy: Paradiso (VIII, 1-8), with translation by Charles S. Singleton, Bollingen Series LXXX, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), I, 82-83.

⁵⁷ Quoted from and translated by J. W. Pope-Hennessy in A Sienese Codex of the Divine Comedy (London: Phaidon Press, 1947), p. 28 and note 151.

⁵⁸ L. Jenaro-MacLennan, The Trecento Commentaries on the "Divina Commedia" and the Epistle to Cangrande (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), pp. 16-17.

⁵⁹ See above p. 25

⁶⁰ On Jocus in Martianus Capella's Marriage of Mercury and Philology, see above pp. 17-18.

⁶¹ Dick, Martianus Capella, (I, 1), pp. 3-4.

⁶² The Commentary on Martianus Capella's 'De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii' attributed to Bernardus Silvestris, edited by Haijo Jan Westra, Studies and Texts 80 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1986), pp. 75-76.

⁶³ Westra, Commentary, p. 78.

⁶⁴ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS fr.9197: 'Le Livre des échecs amoureux', Flemish (c.1500), folio 131 recto.

Chapter I:3

⁶⁵ Useful overviews of humanist scholarship during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries are provided by A. G. Dickens, The Age of Humanism and Reformation (London: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977); and Roberto Weiss, 'The New Learning: Scholarship from Petrarch to Erasmus', in The Age of the Renaissance, edited by Denys Hays (London: Guild Publishing, 1986), pp. 111-22.

⁶⁶ Boccaccio used the Latin authors as quoted by earlier Christian writers, despite his assertions to the contrary in the dedicatory epistle to the *Genealogia*. For a summary of the evidence of medieval sources that he used, see Jean Seznec, The Survival of the Pagan Gods (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 220-24.

⁶⁷ Panofsky, Renaissance & Renascences, p. 75.

⁶⁸ Weiss, 'New Learning', p. 114.

⁶⁹ On the publication of Horace's works see Grant Showerman, Horace and His Influence (Boston, Mass., 1925), from which the data that follows in the text is taken.

⁷⁰ Acron's notes had been written originally in the third century, but had been greatly extended during the Middle Ages by various anonymous commentators. Thus, he is often referred to today as Pseudo-Acron.

⁷¹ *Horatius cum quattuor commentariis*, I, 2, edited by A. Mancinellus (Venice, 1492): Christophorus Landinus explains: "*IOCUS: aut et convenientissime sunt Veneris comites. Nam sine his non potest Venus. Proptereaque ita illam iducit Maro cupidinem alloquentem ut dicat. Nate meae vires: mea magna potentia solus. Volat circum allusit ad forma aut cupidinis. Alatum enim pingit unde Propertius. Idem non frustra ventosas adidit alas. Fecit et humano corde volare deum.*" Antonio Mancinelli states: "*IOCUS: locum id accipimus, inquit Fabius, quod est contrarium serio. Nam effingere et terrere et promittere interim locus est, et Catullus ait: verbosa gaudet Venus loquela. Cantus demum: risus et saltationes et fistulae venerem comitantur.*" Mancinelli reiterates this in his commentary on Ode II, 12, 18 ("*Quam nec ferre pedem dedecuit choris / nec certare ioco nec dare brachia / ludentem nitidis virginibus sacron / Diana celebris die.*") explaining: "*CERTARE IOCO: salibus. Est autem iocus id quod est contrarium serio. Nam effingere et terrere et promittere interim iocus est*"; thus he takes the opportunity to associate a phrase suggesting competition in "having fun", with Jocus and his character.

⁷² 'Enea Piccolomini' in *Archivio storico italiano*, series III (xix, 114, note 13). Parentucelli's system was used as a basis for several later Renaissance libraries, including that of the convent of Monte Oliveto Maggiore near Siena.

⁷³ *Inventario dei libri di Piero di Cosimo dei Medici, compilato nel 1456* in *Archivio storico italiano*, series III, xxi (1875), 106-12.

⁷⁴ Giovanni Aurellio Augurelli, *Selected Works: Iambicus lib. 1-2; Sermonum lib. 1-2; Carminum lib. 1-2* (Venice, 1505). Augurellus (1441-1524) is also known as Aurelio, Aurelli, Arelli, Jean-Muzio and J. A. Muteus. He came from Mantua, was a member of the Platonic Academy in Florence and served Pope Leo X who gave him the position of governor of the little town of Mondolfo. Apart from being a poet, Augurellus had a strong interest in alchemy, which is reflected in an anecdote reported by Jacob Burckhardt: he is said to have written a didactic poem relating to the making of gold, and dedicated it to Pope Leo X who despised the activity; the Pope rewarded him with a beautiful, but empty, purse (in *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy*, translated by S. G. C. Middlemore (London: New English Library, 1960), p. 378).

⁷⁵ Augurelli, 'Iambicus' (I, iv), in *Selected Works*, unpaginated.

⁷⁶ In the eighteenth century an English translation of this poem appeared in Dr. Thomas Parnell's *Poems on Several Occasions* (London, 1747), p. 26: it was entitled 'Anacreontick', thus indicating that it was recognised as an imitation of Anacreon.

⁷⁷ Statius's poem is quoted above, p. 28.

⁷⁸ Augurellus, 'Carmina' (II, xiv, 37-40): "*Tunc omnis illi molliculus iocis / ridet venustis in labia decor / et gratiae ludis, et omni / implicitae veneres lepor*" (in *Selected Works*, folio pii recto); and 'Carmina' (II, xxxi, 1-4): "*Am me latenter deserit potens favor, / Quem diva spiraras mihi: / Ex quo minuti carminis coepi iocos / Te sic jubente ludere.*" (*Selected Works*, unpaginated section)

⁷⁹ There is medieval evidence of the figurative use of both the latin "iocus" and the Italian "giuoco" dating back to the twelfth century Italian love poetry of Rinaldo d'Aquino: "*Vorrea - bella, a poco a poco / con voi rintrare in gioco / com'io son vostro e voi, madonna, mia*" (in *Le rime della scuola Siciliana* (Florence, 1962), p. 110). This example is cited in *Grande Dizionario della Lingua Italiana*, VI, edited by Salvatore Battaglia (Torino: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1970) 98 (14), where "gioco" is explained as: "*rapporto amoroso; congiunzione carnale, atto erotico.*" Battaglia cites further examples from the thirteenth century: "*Causa ludi / saepe nudi / sunt mei*

consortes" (*Carmina Burana*); from the fourteenth century: "*Molti bagni sono che celano li furtivi giuochi*" (*Volgarizzamento dei libri di Ovidio De arte amandi*); and from the sixteenth century: "*Et cosi doppo questo abbracciamento, piacendo lo' il giuoco, si derno fra loro modo di potersi altre volte insieme trovare et di molte volte trovandosi così amorosamente si davano dolce et sollazzevol piacere.*" (Pietro Fortini, *Novelle* [I/2, xxv]), pp.27-28.

⁸⁰ Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando furioso*, V, xi, 109 (Bologna, 1960).

⁸¹ For contemporary accounts of the carnival of 1519, during which Ariosto's play was performed for the papal court, see Marino Sanuto, *I diarii*, xxvii (Venice, 1890), pp. 74-75; and Alessandro Ademollo, *Alessandro VI, Giulio II e Leone X nel carnevale di Roma. Documenti inediti (1499-1520)* (Florence, 1886) p.88.

⁸² Ludwig Pastor, *The History of the Popes*, edited by Ralph Kerr, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1950), VIII, 171-72.

⁸³ Pastor, *Popes* (V, 123). In his introduction to this volume, Pastor cites contemporary sources that describe the immorality in fifteenth and sixteenth century spiritual and secular society (eg. Paulus Jovius, '*Vita Leonis Decimi*' (4), in *Opera* VI, edited by Michele Claudella (Rome, 1987), 85-106; and in Sanuto's diaries).

⁸⁴ Lewis W. Spitz, *Conrad Celtis the German Arch-Humanist*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 90.

⁸⁵ Conrad Celtes, *Quattor libri amorum* (III, ii, 45-47), edited by F. Pindter, *Bibliotheca scriptorum medii recentisque aevorum* (Leipzig, 1934), p. 56.

⁸⁶ Petrus Apianus and B. Amantius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (Ingolstadt, 1534), p. 451.

⁸⁷ Celtes's gemstone is discussed by Otto Kurz in 'Four Forgotten Paintings by Agostino Carracci' in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XV (1952), 224-25.

⁸⁸ Natalis Comititis, *Mythologiae*, IV (Venice, 1567) 120.

⁸⁹ On Eros and Himeros in Hesiod, see above Chapter I:1, pp. 11-15.

⁹⁰ Vincenzo Cartari, *Imagini de i dei de gli antichi* (Venice, 1571; reprinted New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1976), p. 539, illustration p. 542.

⁹¹ Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia* (Rome, 1593), p. 106.

⁹² Ripa, *Iconologia* (Rome, 1603), p. 187.

⁹³ Ripa, *Iconologie* (Paris, 1644; reprinted New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1976) unpaginated between folios 104 and 105; illustration folio Niiij

⁹⁴ Joannis Marius Mattius, *Opinionum Libri Tres* (1598), p. 106.

⁹⁵ *Martial Epigrams*, I, with translation by D. R. Shackleton Bailey, Loeb Classical Library (London, 1993).

⁹⁶ D.Laurentius Ramirez de Prado, *Hypomnemata ad lib. speculatorum M. Valerii Martialis* (Paris, 1607), pp. 39-41. He also cites the following texts in support of his argument: "Virgil. *Capellam appellat lascivam: et hic noster lib.13. epigr.39 Lascivum pecus, et viridi non utile Baccho / dat poenas necuit iam tener ille deo*" haedos lascivos vocat, et infra epigr.45. "*Lascivos leporum cursus*". Et Virgil. *Galateam lascivam puellam dicit, quae malo petebat iuunem, et se cupiebat ante videri. Hinc natum est, ut hoc nomine utamur pro libidinoso et inhonesto, ut idem Epigr. 5. "Lasciva est nobis pagina, vita proba est."* . . . *Lascivi igitur dicti sunt inhonesti, quod lascivia coniuncta sit cum actis venereis sic Catullus Epigr. 17. Ad Aurelium, "Praedicare cupis meos amores, / Nec clam: nam simul exjocatis una."* Et Ovid. lib. 3. *De Arte. Jocus res Venereas appellavit, "Cum custode foris, tunica servare puella, / celent furtivos balnea multa jocos."* Quid? Quod "ludendi" verbum subputidum est, et lascivae significationis. Livius Andronicus apud Festum in "*Adfatim, adfatim, odi, bibi, lusi.*" . . . Catullus in Hymenaeo: "*Ludite, ut lubet, et brevi / liberos date . . .*" Ovidius lib.1. *Amor. Eleg.8 "Ludunt formosae, casta est, quam nemo rogavit."* Et lib.2. *de Arte: "Ludit, sed furto celetur culpa molesto", et Lib.3. "Ludite, eunt anni more fluentis aqua". . . Auctor Petronius in Satyrico, "Ipse pater veri, doctusque. Epicurus in arte [amare] lusit, et hoc vitam dixit habere telos"* Sic intelligo epigr. 45. lib.6. "*Lusistis: satis est: lascivi nubite cunni*", et lib.11. epigr.105 "*Tu teneris gaudes, me ludere teste lucerna.*" Quod frequenti versu declarat, "*et iuuat admissa rumpere luce latus.*" "

NOTES PART TWO

Chapter II:1

¹ Seneca. '*Octavia*' lines 557-560 in *Seneca's Tragedies*, II, with translation by F. J. Miller, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1917), pp. 454-55.

² Plautus's lines are quoted above pp. 8-9.

³ Statius's lines are quoted above p. 15.

⁴ Pausanias's description is given above p. 12.

⁵ The evolution and role of the classical putto is fully discussed in Roger Stuveras, *Le putto dans l'art romain*, Collection Latomus XCIX (Brussels, 1969)

⁶ Ernest Will, *Relief culturel gréco-romain. Contribution à l'histoire de l'art de l'empire romain* (Paris, 1955), pp. 197-98; and Stuveras, *Putto*, p. 129

Chapter II:2

⁷ This episode from Prudentius's *Psychomachia* is described, quoted and translated above, pp. 20-22.

⁸ For information on the sistrum and the Isis cult see *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, XVII, 354, edited by Stanley Sadie (London, 1980).

⁹ For further information on the Isis cult see W. H. Roscher, *Lexicon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie* (Leipzig, 1890-97), pp. 359-550; see especially Isis as Aphrodite pp. 494-499; and the Isis cult in Rome pp. 400-408 by W. Drexler.

¹⁰ For further information on the Cybele cult see the sources cited above, note 9; and the *New Grove Dictionary*, V, 111.

¹¹ The surviving manuscripts of Prudentius' *Psychomachia* were first collected and organised by Richard Stettiner in *Die Illustrierten Prudentius-Handschriften* where the most comprehensive illustrations can be found. Stettiner's analysis of the manuscripts is supplemented by Helen

Woodruff in The Illustrated Manuscripts of Prudentius (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1930). The full identification of the manuscripts, together with a brief description, is given in Appendix III [a].

¹² Woodruff organised the extant manuscripts of the *Psychomachia* into two groups: group I consists of French and Anglo-Saxon manuscripts; group II consists of manuscripts from the Rhine and Meuse valleys (see Appendix III [b]).

¹³ I extend my thanks to Michele P. Brown of the Manuscript Department of the British Library (author of A Guide to Western Historical Scripts from Antiquity to 1600 [London: British Library, 1990]) for her help in reading and interpreting the handwriting of these glosses, many of which have oddities in the Latin. The figure with a horn illustrated in Group B manuscripts as well as in manuscript Ly (Figs. 11-15, discussed above pp.55-56) may in fact relate to such glosses as these rather than to the text of Prudentius himself.

¹⁴ There are ten extant manuscripts of this particular French moralisation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. They are listed in Robert H. Lucas, 'Medieval French Translations of the Latin Classics' in Speculum, XLV (1970), 242-44.

¹⁵ The description of Jocus and Cupid in the *Ovide moralisé* is quoted above pp. 23-25, and in Appendix II.

¹⁶ Illustrated in Erwin Panofsky, Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance (London: Harper and Row, 1972), plate XLVIII.

¹⁷ Panofsky discusses the change in the physical appearance of Cupid from princely youth to naked putto in Studies, pp. 114-21.

Chapter II:3

¹⁸ Celtes's drawing and its use by Apianus and others is discussed above pp. 37-42.

¹⁹ Celtes's imitation of Horace is discussed above p. 36-37

²⁰ Winged Venuses did occur in Northern art, in the sense of *Frau Minne* (see Heinrich Kohlhaussen, *Minnekästchen im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1928), p.41). The winged Venus in Italian art is unusual. It is discussed by Lauren Soth in "Two Paintings By Corregio" in Art Bulletin, XLVI (1964)

539-544 (542-43): wings became an attribute of planetary Venus in North Italian art, and thus an association is made between planetary and Celestial Venus. (See also correspondence between Soth and E. Verheyen in Art Bulletin, LXV (1965), 542-43, and 544.) Soth cites Cartari's description of Cupid as a heavenly, winged Love, whose wings enable him to rise above earthly things (Cartari *Imagini* (Venice, 1647), p.257.

²¹ Cartari's text is quoted above p. 39

²² The Hieroglyphica of Horapollo, translated by George Boas (New York: Pantheon Books Inc., 1950), p. 79. One of the oldest manuscripts of Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica* is inscribed as having been bought on the island of Andros in 1419. By the time of its first publication in 1505, the fashion for allegory and enigma was well-established in Italy, especially in Neo-Platonic circles. Within a hundred years there were at least thirty editions, translations and reprints of the *Hieroglyphica* published, as well as commentaries. In the sixteenth century, Horapollo was considered to be an authority on the meaning of Egyptian hieroglyphs, although subsequent scholarship is sceptical of the authenticity of his work.

²³ Enea Vico *Ex gemmis et cameis antiquorum* (Rome, n.d. [c.1550]). Also illustrated in The Illustrated Bartsch: Italian Masters of the Sixteenth Century. Enea Vico, edited by John Spike (New York, 1985), XXX, 73.

²⁴ Cartari, *Imagini* (Venice, 1571) pp. 540-41: " . . . la testuggine sotto il piede di Venere, percioche questa sa il pericolo à che va quando si congiunge con il maschio, conciosia che le bisogni riversarsi con la pancia in su, & il maschio, compito che ha il fatto suo, se ne va via, e lascia quella, che da se non può ridrizzarsi, in preda Ta gli altri animali, ma sopra tutti all' aquila. Per la quale cosa essa con somma continenza si astiene dal coito, e fuggendo il maschio prepone la salute al libidoso piacere, al quale è sforzata pure di consentire poi tocca da certa herba, che tutta accende di libidine, si che piu non teme poscia di cosa alcuna." Further, Cartari cites Pliny in explaining that the silence of the tortoise, which women should emulate, is due to its having no tongue.

²⁵ "Imagini di Venere, di Cupido, del Giuoco, et del Capro, quali significano la generatione, et l'immagine della testitudine hieroglyphico che dinota il pericolo delle donne maritate, e parturienti et qual deve essere il loro ufficio nella cura familiare et allevare figlioli, et il silentio esser necessario alle donne sopra ogni vertu."

²⁶ Cartari, *Imagini* (Venice, 1624), p. 394 and (Venice, 1647), p. 278.

²⁷ Some editions of Cartari's *Imagini* reverse the figures, for example, (Venice, 1580), p. 542; whilst the French versions have both Venus and the

woman on a goat turning their heads to look out at the reader: (Lyons, 1581), p. 451; (Tournon, 1606), p. 771; and (Lyons, 1624), p. 657.

²⁸ In the 1615 Padua edition of Cartari's *Imagini* (p. 477) the illustration has been printed sideways to the text.

²⁹ On the physical appearance of fools and jesters see Enid Welsford's comprehensive book *The Fool: His Social and Literary History* (London: Faber & Faber, 1935).

³⁰ For a thorough discussion of Giotto's Folly/*Stultitia* see Selma Pfeiffenberger, 'The Iconology of Giotto's Virtue and Vices at Padua', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Bryn Mawr College, 1966), chapter 5.

³¹ On the Feast of Fools see E. K. Chambers, *The Medieval Stage* (Oxford, 1948); and Pfeiffenberger, 'Giotto's Virtues and Vices', chapter 5, note 29.

³² Leonardo Agostini Senese, *Le gemme antiche* (Rome, 1656), p. 32 and Pl. LVII.

³³ The putto wearing a mask is the subject of further discussion below in Chapters III:1 and III:2.

³⁴ Otto Kurz, 'Four Forgotten Paintings by Agostino Carracci' in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XV (1951), p. 226, note 2 cites the last appearance of Celtes's gemstone image in *Cabinet des pierres antiques gravées...tirés du cabinet de Gorlé, et autres autres célèbres cabinets de l'Europe* Vol. 2, 1778, pl. 243, No. 531.

³⁵ Paolo Fiammingo is the Italianised name of Pauwels Franck, born in Antwerp c. 1540. He worked in Italy (Venice, Rome and Florence) from before 1573; and from c. 1580 until his death in 1596 he lived in Venice. The four pictures of the *Amori* are painted on canvas (160 x 260 cm.) and the set is now in storage in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna; their provenance is fully discussed by Otto Kurz in 'Four Forgotten Paintings', pp. 221-33; reattributions to Fiammingo are cited in 'Afterthoughts on the Carracci Exhibition II' in *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, XLIX (1957), 291; and in D. Degrazia Bohlin, *Prints and Related Drawings by the Carracci Family. A Catalogue Raisonné* (Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art, 1979), p. 306.

³⁶ Kurz, 'Four Forgotten Paintings', p. 223. All four paintings comprising the *Amori*, and the set of engravings from them, are illustrated in Kurz's article.

³⁷ The other two engravings are attributed to one of the Sadeler family (Kurz, 'Four Forgotten Paintings', p. 224)

³⁸ Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice*, I, edited by G. Zanotti (Bologna, 1841), p. 78. The set of four paintings are thought by Thomas Puttfarken (in 'Mutual Love and the Golden Age: Matisse and *Gli Amori de' Carracci*' in *Burlington Magazine*, CXXIV (1982), 203-208) to represent the Ovidian four ages of mankind: Gold, Silver, Bronze and Iron.

³⁹ Kurz, 'Four Forgotten Paintings', pp. 224-27

⁴⁰ Cartari, *Imagini* (Venice, 1580), p. 501. Cartari's imagery relates to Pausanias's *Noctes Atticae*, vi, 23), where he describes a bas-relief on which was carved a figure of Eros with a palm which Anteros tries to wrest from him. On classical and humanist sources of Eros and Anteros see Merrill's and De Tervarent's articles cited above Part I, note 54.

⁴¹ Cited in Kurz, 'Four Forgotten Paintings', p. 227.

⁴² Puttfarken, 'Mutual Love', pp. 204-206. His interpretation (that the paintings represent the Ovidian Four Ages) hangs on the strength of his analysis of the first painting as *The Golden Age*; his argument that the other three paintings represent the ages of Silver, Bronze and Iron is less convincing. Rather, the paintings seem to be allegorical representations of four developments arising from Love: Reciprocal Love (an ideal love of mutual enjoyment, as found in the Golden Age); Love Misused (when men are at fault in taking love forcibly from unwilling women); Love Extinguished (when women are at fault for forgetting their lovers); and Love Chastised (the consequences of love misused or extinguished).

⁴³ Lucretius, '*De Rerum Natura*' (V, 1390), is cited by Puttfarken in 'Golden Age and Justice in Sixteenth-Century Florentine Political Thought and Imagery: Observations on Three Paintings by Jacopo Zucchi' in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XLIII (1980), 134. In fact, Lucretius merely states that song and dance were developed during the early development of man, not the "first age" of his development.

⁴⁴ A set of engravings of *The Nine Muses* (c. 1592) by Hendrik Goltzius, that includes Terpsichore with a harp at her feet (Fig. 27) and Thalia holding a fool-stick (Fig. 28), is almost exactly contemporary with the paintings of the *Amori* by Fiammingo. Goltzius travelled Italy, including Venice, in 1590-91 and ideas for his imagery may have evolved at that time.

NOTES PART THREE

Chapter III:1

¹ Frederick Hartt has published several drawings which are the preliminary studies for the decorations representing *Les Giuochi di Putti*, in *Giulio Romano* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958), p. 159 and figs. 352-354. He cites documentation showing that on January 29th 1532, an artist called Pagni was paid for painting *putti* there; and on February 7th, another artist, Rinaldo, was paid for having painted half of the *putti* in a large picture for the centre of the room.

² This cartoon, cited by Madelaine Jarry in 'Jeux d'amours, jeux d'enfants' in *L'Oeil*, CCIV (1971), 8, is in the Scherer collection, Zurich (No. 218).

³ Tapestries of this theme are discussed in Jarry, 'Jeux', pp. 2-9 and 52.

⁴ Marie Csermyansky, *Tapisserie des Medicis. Jeux d'enfants* (Budapest: Ars Decorativa, 1948); and the catalogue of the exhibition *Tapisseries anciennes des XVIe et XVIIIe siècles provenant di Musée des Arts décoratifs de Budapest* (Lausanne, 1969). For published studies of the Raphael tapestries see Csermyansky's bibliography.

⁵ For Giorgio Vasari's reference to Giovanni da Udine and Raphael's cartoons, see his 'Life of Raphael', in *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architetti* edited by Gaetano Milanesi (Florence, 1889), IV, 367-68 (hereafter *Vasari-Milanesi*).

⁶ See Eugène Müntz, *Les tapisseries de Raphael au Vatican* (Paris, 1897): he shows that inventories supply proof that after the death of the pope the tapestries were carefully conserved in the Vatican. They are cited for the first time in 1544 after which they can be traced at different dates until 1790. Eight tapestries were bought at auction in Paris in 1904, from the collection of the Princess Mathilda, which are copies of the originals of Leo X. The subjects of twelve other pieces can be reconstructed with the help of inventories, prints and drawings. Four of these tapestries can be found today in the Museum of Decorative Arts in Budapest (Jarry, 'Jeux', pp. 6-7).

⁷ Laurinda Dixon, *Alchemical Imagery in Bosch's 'Garden of Delights'* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1981), pp. 25-6.

⁸ Salmon Trismosin, *Le Toyson d'or* (The Golden Fleece) (Paris, 1613) is cited in Dixon, *Alchemical Imagery*, p. 86 note 26, and p. 87 note 1.

⁹ Dixon, *Alchemical Imagery*, pp. 25-9, 45 and 73; Trismosin, *Le Toyson d'or*, p. 86.

¹⁰ *Ludus Puerorum* was written by Arnould de Villeneuve (1240-1311), who was also known as Arnaldus de Villa Nova, Papal and Court Physician; an early and very rare German edition (published in Hamburg and Frankfurt in 1683) is listed in *From Alchemy to Atoms I: Alchemy 1500-1750* a catalogue of rare books compiled by Walter Aliche (Vaduz, 1975), No. 11. *Clavis philosophorum, ludus puerorum et labor mulierum* was written in 1489 by Paulus D'Eck de Sulzbach, and published in *Theatrum Chemicum*, IV (1659; reprinted Turin: Bottega d' Erasmo, 1981), 1007-1014.

¹¹ Cited and illustrated in Dixon, *Alchemical imagery*, p.26.

¹² The illustrations of Trismosin's manuscript have been reproduced and the text translated by "J.K." in *Splendor Solis; Alchemical Treatises of Solomon Trismosin* (London 1920). The '*Splendor solis*' manuscript in the British Library is considered to be a rare alchemical classic: it is a unique and elaborately illustrated manuscript on vellum, written in German and dated 1582. The textual content, however, seems rather superficial, most chapters consisting of a short paragraph stating what the alchemical processes are called and describing them in the broadest terms. This implies that the book was intended more for the lay reader than for any serious alchemical use. J. K. explains in his foreword that *Splendor solis* derives from Trismosin's longer work, *Aureum vellus*, in which his alchemical processes are described at length, as are his wanderings in search of the philosopher's stone. *Aureum vellus* (Rohrschach-am-Bodensee, 1598) was published in France as *Toison d'Or* in 1602, 1613 and 1622. It is summarised by Professor Karl C. Schmieder in *Geschichte der Alchemie* (Halle, 1832), pp. 249-54. Manuscript versions of Trismosin's work dates from c. 1500. For manuscript sources see D. W. Singer, *Catalogue of Latin and Vernacular Alchemical Manuscripts in Great Britain and Northern Ireland Dating before the Sixteenth Century* (Brussels, 1928-31).

¹³ On Augurellus, see above Chapter I:3, pp. 34-35 and note 65. The alchemical activities of Augurellus are mentioned in an article by Gustav F. Hartlaub that explores the interesting occurrence of groups of playing *putti* in paintings of *Melancholia* by, for example, Andrea Mantegna (c.1430-1506) and Lucas Cranach (1472-1553) ('*Arcana Artis: II Ludus Puerorum*' in *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, VI (1937), 296-306). Hartlaub recognises that the *putti* make reference to alchemical "*ludus puerorum*", a term that was already in use in early Greek alchemical sources, and he suspects the possibility of sexual implications.

¹⁴ The symbolic significance of the goat has already been explored above p.64 in connection with illustrations in Cartari's *Imagini*.

¹⁵ Sansoni-Harrap, *Standard Italian-English Dictionary*, I (1972), p. 1404 (4): *ucello* = "*membro virile*"; *Grande Dizionario*, VI, 825 (4): *giostra* = "*gara d'amore; trattenimento erotico*" and (5): *giostra* = "*rapporto sensual, congiungimento carnale (giostra amorosa, giostra di Venere)*"

¹⁶ "Youth and sensual pleasure are worthless." It is interesting in this context to note that "*adolescere*" can also mean "to burn."

¹⁷ Ambrosius Calepini, *Dictionarius Linguae Latinae* (Paris, 1519): the entry under IOCUS refers the reader to the entry for LUDUS, but also indicates that "*iocosus*" can signify "*amoenum*" (delightful) and "*venustum*" (lovely, charming).

Chapter III:2

¹⁸ The full story of Lot is related in Genesis, XVIII and XIX. The painting is described in the catalogue of the exhibition *The Genius of Venice 1500-1600*, edited by Jane Martineau and Charles Hope (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1983), pp. 152-53.

¹⁹ On the vice *Luxuria* see Émile Mâle, *The Gothic Image: Religious Art in France of the 13th century*, translated by Dora Nussey (New York, 1958), pp. 119-20. At Chartres and Amiens the sculptural programme shows *Luxuria* as a man and woman embracing, the woman holding a mirror and a sceptre; in the windows of Auxerre, Notre Dame and Lyons, *Luxuria* has only the mirror as her attribute.

²⁰ "It would be a good thing for each man to have a mirror, not only for his face . . . but one that would let him see . . . his wisdom." (Plautus, '*Epidicus*' (III, iii, 1) in Nixon, *Plautus II* (1917), 318-319); "Wisdom is the unspotted mirror of the power of God" (the Apocryphal 'Book of the Wisdom of Solomon' 7:23); and "Wisdom is also called the stainless mirror of the energy or working of God" (Origen, '*De principiis*' [I, ii, 5] in *The Writings of Origen*, translated by Rev. Frederick Crombie, edited by Rev. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson [Edinburgh, 1869]): cited in Pfeifferberger, 'Giotto's Virtues and Vices', Chapter IV.

²¹ The "*speculum stultorum*" tradition culminated in Sebastian Brant's *Ship of Fools* (1494), declining after Erasmus's parody of the genre in *Praise of Folly* (1511) which reflected a different and more human attitude to folly. This issue is further explored below, Chapter V:1.

²² On the development of the fool/jester's *marotte* see W. Willeford, *The Fool and his Sceptre* (Evanston, 1969).

²³ See Diane Owen Hughes, 'Sumptuary Law and Social Relations in Renaissance Italy' in Disputes - Settlements: Law and Human Relations in the West, edited by J. Bossy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 69-99. Sumptuary law in most Italian cities was very censorious about "respectable women" baring their shoulders: necklines had to cover the collarbone at the very least. Venetian women had been the most daring in their fashion, but by the sixteenth century, their exposure of flesh was also regulated; only prostitutes were allowed to wear the prohibited fashions. See also 'Delle meretrici' in the exhibition catalogue Il Gioco dell'amore: Le cortigiane di Venezia dal Trecento al Settecento, edited by Stephen H. Goddard (Venice, 1990), No.74 (unpaginated).

²⁴ Described by John Ruskin, 'The Ducal Palace' in The Stones of Venice, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1883), II, viii, 342. The pillar which depicted *Luxuria* was the tenth counted from the right (according to Ruskin's method, explained p. 330), on the first face, that is, the one on the outer side, "fronting the Sea or Piazzetta."

²⁵ Moshe Barasch cites John Chrysostom ('*Homilia VI in S. Matthaeum*') and Tertullian ('*De spectaculis*') in 'Masks in Renaissance Art' in Scripta hierosolymitana, XIX (1967), 75-87.

²⁶ Ripa's Iconologia shows a mask as an attribute of various different personifications, only some of which are associated with deceit: *Bugia*, *Calliope*, *Comedia*, *Contritione*, *Erato*, *Euterpe*, *Fraude*, *Imitatione*, *Inganno*, *Lealta*, *Melpomene*, *Morte*, *Otio*, *Pitura*, *Polinnia*, *Riso*, *Simulatione*, *Talia* and *Tradimento*.

²⁷ Jean Paul Richter, The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci, (London, 1883), I, 357.

²⁸ Translated by Elizabeth Holt in A Documentary History of Art (New York, 1958), II, 33. The letter is quoted in Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura, scultura ed architettura, edited by Giorgio Bottari and Stefano Ticozzi (Milan, 1822-25), III, 17-18; (hereafter, Bottari-Ticozzi). See also Vasari-Milanese (VIII, 240). The finished painting has the slightly different Latin inscriptions: *SICUT MAIORES MIHI ITA ET EGO POSTERIS MEA VIRTUTE PRELUXI; VIRTUTUM OMNIUM VAS; PREMIUM VIRTUTIS; and VITIA VIRTUTI SUBIACENT*.

²⁹ Grande Dizionario, IX, 879 (5): "l'aspetto istintivo, irrazionale, sensuale della personalità virile (in contrapposizione a uomo, che indica invece la razionalità, il controllo dei propri istinti, la ponderatezza)." Whilst specific literary examples cited for this use are modern, the use of *maschio* to convey the "adult" qualities of man are cited from much earlier literature: "*Quei che da la gota / porge la barba in su le spalle brune, / fu, quando Grecia fu di maschi vota,*

/ . . . / *augure*." (Dante, "Inferno" [XX, 108]); "*La gioventù femina non si potea difendere dalla Lussuria e rapina de' maschi, né per guardie di parenti, né per fortezze di mura*." (Leonardo [II, 329]).

³⁰ *Grande Dizionario*, IX, 879 (5). It should also be noted that *maschio* may also be used for a boy child, in the same way as *putto*, *bambino*, or *figlio* (IX, 879, No.9): thus the visual representation of *putti* could, in itself, be an evocation of masculine virility.

³¹ It is one of a set of twenty engravings, only two of which are not by Agostino. The reference mark "*d'Ant. Salamanca*" was not used on the earliest prints of this set. There are several references to Agostino in Vasari's *Vite* (*Vasari-Milanesi*, V, 23; 414 notes 2 and 3; 415; and 420).

³² The meaning of masks in art is a very broad and interesting subject, and it is beyond the scope of this study to cover it in detail; however, in the context of *Luxuria* the subject is further discussed below in the following chapter (III:3), as well as in connection with Bronzino's *Allegory of Venus and Cupid* in Chapter IV:3.

³³ The description of *Lot and his Daughters* given in *The Genius of Venice* (p. 153) suggests that it is an allegory of the conflict between *voluptas* and *virtus*, reading the mirror as a symbol of prudence and wisdom.

Chapter III:3

³⁴ This version of the drawing after Michelangelo is discussed by Bernard Berenson in *The Drawings of the Florentine Painters* (Chicago, 1970), II, 223, note 1637.

³⁵ Discussed in Johannes Wilde, *Italian Drawings in the British Museum: Michelangelo and his School* (London, 1953), pp. 124-25 and note 89; illustrated Pl. CXLI.

³⁶ Reproduced in the exhibition catalogue *Disegni antichi di allegoria e mitologia*, introduced by Mario Praz and edited by Guido del Borgo (Rome, 1975), Pl. 17.

³⁷ The exception is C. Justi, who discusses the drawings in *Michelangelo Neue Beiträge* (Berlin, 1909) pp. 354-58; he merely describes the woman as a mother with her naughty playing children, one of whom is dressing up in some found carnival clothes.

³⁸ A. Bertoli *Don Giulio Clovio* (Modena, 1882), p. 14. John W. Bradley, in *The Life and Works of Giorgio Giulio Clovio* (London, 1891), p.357, states that this inventory is from a bundle or packet of documents marked "B". Further, his entry for the Prudence drawing describes "Prudence with two children, a pen drawing after Michelangelo, by Clovio", thus informing us of the medium used. Don Giulio Clovio was a miniaturist who had worked for Cosimo de' Medici and then worked in Rome. Vasari included a short description of his life in his *Vite* (*Vasari-Milanesi*, VII, 557-569; *Vasari-Betterini-Barocchi*, VI, 213-219; *Vasari-De Vere*, IX, 243-253)

³⁹ Raimonde Van Marle, *Iconographie de l'art profane en moyen-âge* (Hague, 1932), pp. 66-67.

⁴⁰ Aristotle, 'On Virtues and Vices' in *The Athenian Constitution, the Eudemian Ethics, On Virtues and Vices*, with translation by H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library, (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1935), pp. 489-503: there, Wisdom (*Prudentia*) opposes Folly (*Stultitia*); Courage opposes Cowardice; Gentleness opposes Ill-Temper; Sobriety opposes Profligacy; and Self-Control opposes Uncontrol.

⁴¹ *Anticlaudian*, VIII, v & vi; and IX, v, edited by Andrew Creighton (n.p., 1944). On classical and biblical sources of the mirror as an attribute of Wisdom, see above Chapter III:2, note 20.

⁴² The personification of Folly in art outside Italy, as it relates to this study, is further discussed below Part Five.

⁴³ The round object has been identified as a cheese by Mâle in *The Gothic Image*, p. 120, note 2. It may, however, represent bread, since similar portrayals of the Fool accompany Psalms 14 and 53, both of which begin "*Dixit insipiens in corde suo non est Deus . . .*" (The fool hath said in his heart there is no God)(Fig. 39): each psalm states "Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge, who eat up my people as they eat bread . . ." (verse 4). On the fools depicted in the letter D in Psalms 14 and 53, see D. J. Gifford 'Iconographical Notes Toward a Definition of the Medieval Fool' in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XXXVII (1974), 336-342. Eventually, the round object disappeared completely from visual imagery, and the fool's club evolved into the jester's ubiquitous fool-stick/*marotte*.

⁴⁴ The most influential of these sculptural programmes was carved on the central porch of the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, an arrangement that was repeated in other French cathedrals such as Amiens, Auxerre and Chartres. On the development of the virtues and vices generally, see Adolf

Katzenellenbogen, Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art (London: Warburg Institute, 1939); and Mâle, The Gothic Image, Chapter 3.

⁴⁵ St Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica II, ii, 46, edited by De Rubeis et al (Rome, 1948) p. 251.

⁴⁶ It is the opinion of Pfeiffenberger that there was no tradition of Virtue and Vice Cycles in Italian art before about 1300.

⁴⁷ Giotto's Folly/*Stultitia* is more fully discussed above p. 66, in relation to the iconography of Jocus.

⁴⁸ Pfeiffenberger ('Giotto's Virtues and Vices', Chapter V), together with most other commentators on the Arena chapel frescoes, mistakenly believes that Giotto's painting was the first to show the double-faced Prudence in Western art. Close examination reveals that what can look very much like a double-faced head in certain reproductions, is, in fact, only the configuration of the hair on the back of Prudence's head. Could later artists looking at Giotto's painting for inspiration, have made the same visual error? In addition, Pfeiffenberger states (V, 5, note 19) that there is no similar example of "Prudence *bifrons*", chronologically, between Giotto's and that of Raphael in the Stanza della Segnatura (1511), yet at least two examples can be readily found: for example, that painted by Piero della Francesca in The Triumph of Federigo da Montefeltro on the reverse of his portrait of the Duke (1465); and, also in the fifteenth century, the glazed-ceramic La Prudenzia by Luca della Robbia on the vault of the chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal in the church of S. Miniato in Florence.

⁴⁹ On masks at the feast of fools see above Chapter III.2, pp. 88-89 and note 25.

⁵⁰ On *maschera* used as a possible punning reference to *maschio*, and for figurative meanings of *maschio*, see above Chapter III:2, pp. 90-91 and notes 29 and 30.

⁵¹ On Leonardo Agostino's masked *putto* see above Chapter II:3, pp. 67-68

⁵² On Prudentius's reference to Jocus and Amor in the entourage of Luxuria, see above Chapter I:2, pp. 21-22.

Chapter III:4

⁵³ The paintings are usually identified as those which decorated the piece of furniture mentioned by the painter Vincenzo Catena in his will of 1525 which states: " . . . mio restolo di nogera con zerte fegurete dentro depinte de mano di miser zuan Belino." Whilst it is possible that the *restolo* in this will is not connected with this group of paintings, the validity of the identification has been generally accepted. A *restello* was a relatively small, ornamented object of furniture to which a mirror was often added; it usually had pegs intended for suspending toilet articles. Mirrors made of glass were precious objects during the fifteenth century, and, therefore, would have been considered worthy of special adornment.

⁵⁴ All five panels are illustrated in Philip Hendry & Ludwig Goldscheider *Giovanni Bellini* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1945), plates 73-7. On interpretations of the panels see also Giles Robertson, *Giovanni Bellini* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968) p.104ff and Edgar Wind, *Bellini's "Feast of the Gods": a Study in Venetian Humanism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 48, note 14. The Bellini panel paintings were initially investigated by Gustav Ludwig in '*Restello, Spiegel und Toilettenutensilien in Venedig zur Zeit der Renaissance*' in *Italienische Forschungen* (1906), I, 222-258; and a possible reconstruction of the *restello* offered (Fig. 54 [a]). Wind cursorily rejects Ludwig's reconstruction in a footnote, preferring that shown in Fig. 54 [b]. Considering the size of the paintings (three are 34 x 22 cm., one 32 x 22 cm. and one 27 x 19 cm.), Wind's reconstruction implies that the mirror itself must have been at least 60 cm. in diameter, an unusually large size for a mirror at that time. In both Ludwig's and Wind's reconstructions, the furniture-piece itself would have been about a metre square. All but one of the paintings are set in landscapes: that depicting "Prudence" is an interior scene, a visual incongruity not taken into account in Wind's reconstruction, but apparently of concern to Ludwig, who invented the existence of an additional missing panel in order to place the Prudence panel centrally whilst still maintaining a symmetry to the overall design of his reconstruction. Wind's reconstruction seems quite implausible both in shape and in the proposed size of the mirror, despite the logic behind the order of the panels; Ludwig's, on the other hand, whilst not totally convincing, at least resembles the form of *restelli* of the period

⁵⁵ For example, Kenneth Clark calls it "*Vanitas*" in *The Nude: a Study in Ideal Form* (New York: Doubleday and Company Inc., 1956), p. 415; whilst Wind identifies it as "*Vana Gloria*".

⁵⁶ On Giotto's *Folly* and the print *Fight for the Hose*, see above Chapter II:3, p. 64.

⁵⁷ The date and origin of the print *Fight for the Hose* is attributed by Arthur M. Hind, *Early Italian Engraving I*, (London, 1938), 63-4.

⁵⁸ The influence of Northern European prints on Italian artists, especially those of Venice, is well established: see, for example, *Genius of Venice*, pp. 303-304.

⁵⁹ Katzenellenbogen, *Virtues and Vices*, p. 58. Jean Adhémar suggests that this type of *Luxuria* derived from a Medieval/Christian misinterpretation of antique Roman images of the Earth goddess, Tellus (*Influences antiques dans l'art du moyen âge français* (London, 1937), p. 197): Tellus/Terre/Earth was often depicted seated or reclining, suckling the creatures of the earth, represented sometimes by *putti*, but often by snakes, toads and monsters. The Medieval eye interpreted these images as representations of the devouring of the woman's sexual parts (a suitable image for *Luxuria*). Tellus was often accompanied by the Siren, representing the sea; but, again, to the Medieval mind the Siren was a seductress, insatiably promiscuous, so this figure was seen as a further attribute of *Luxuria*. Adhémar's theory is accepted by Louis Réau in *Iconographie de l'art Chrétien* (Paris, 1955), I, p. 166; and Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences*, p. 84.

⁶⁰ *Luxuria* portrayed as an embracing couple can be seen in various other places, for example, in illustrations of the 'Bible moralisé', illustrated in Millard Meiss, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry, The Limbourgs and Their Contemporaries* (London, 1974), Pl. 304: and on the underside of the *Kaiserpokal* (c. 1300), a chalice in the Town Hall at Osnabrück, illustrated in Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences*, Fig.71.

⁶¹ Cited by Earl Jeffrey Richards in 'Reflections on *Oiseuse's* Mirror: Iconographic Tradition, *Luxuria* and the "*Roman de la Rose*"' in *Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie* (1982), Pl. 1.

⁶² Cited and illustrated in Richards, '*Oiseuse's* Mirror', Pl.5.

⁶³ Illustrated in Mâle, *The Gothic Image*, Fig. 117.

⁶⁴ The issue of the identification of *Luxuria* is investigated by Richards in '*Oiseuse's* Mirror', pp. 296-311.

⁶⁵ Cited by Sez nec, *Survival*, p. 89.

⁶⁶ See Sez nec, *Survival*, pp. 127, 197, 204-205.

⁶⁷ Sez nec, *Survival*, pp. 197.

⁶⁸ On *Luxuria* carved on the capitol of a column at the Doge's Palace in Venice, see above Ch. III:2, pp. 87-88.

⁶⁹ Ruskin, Venice, p. 354

⁷⁰ On the noise-making weapons of Jocus see above pp. 21-22 and 51-54.

⁷¹ Wind, Bellini's 'Feast', p. 48, note 14.

NOTES PART FOUR

Chapter IV:1

¹ Il Libro della Ricordanze di Giorgio Vasari, edited by Alessandro del Vita (Rome, 1938), p. 36.

² Two copies of this painting, by Vasari himself, are known to exist at this time: one is in Castello Vincigliata in Florence; the other in Temple Newsome House in Leeds. A similar composition, now in the Art Institute of Chicago, is discussed fully below, pp130-134. There are, in fact, three other paintings of the penitent St Jerome recorded by Vasari: on December 4th 1545, "*si mandò a Napoli a Messer Tomaso Canbj una tela dun San Jeronjmo in penitenzia [per] la quale a di ultimo di detto fu mandato dal detto Messer Tommaso una botte di Magniaguerra di valuta di scudi dieci cioè*" (Ricordanze, p.53); on April 21st 1547 "*il Reverendissimo Monsignore il Vescovo di Pavja de Rossi da Parma mi allonga a dipingere due tele . . . un Cristo morto con la Nostra donna . . . nell'altra San Jeronjmo in penitentja quando Venere fugge dalla oratione di detto coj suoj amorj per prezzo*" (Ricordanze, p.57); and in 1566 (no date specified) "*Ricordo come si fecie allo illustissimo Principe de Fiorenza et Siena dua quadrij, in uno San Jeronjmo in penitenzia, l'altro San Francesco che riceva le st[if]gmate*" (Ricordanze, p.94).

³ ". . . and in a large picture a St Jerome in Penitence of the size of life, who, contemplating the death of Christ, whom he has before him on the cross, is beating his breast in order to drive from his mind the thoughts of Venus and the temptations of the flesh, which at times tormented him, although he lived in woods and places wild and solitary, as he relates himself at great length. To demonstrate which I made a Venus who with Love in her arms is flying from that contemplation, and holding Play by the hand, while the quiver and arrows have fallen to the ground; besides which, the shafts shot by Cupid against the Saint return to him all broken, and some that fall are brought back to him by the doves of Venus in their beaks" (translation from Gaston de Vere, Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors and Architects by Giorgio Vasari, 10 volumes (London, 1912-15), X, 186-87). The original text is from Giorgio Vasari, Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architetti, in 9 volumes, with annotations and comments by Gaetano Milanesi, (Florence: Sansoni, 1889), VII, 669. Since the more recent Giorgio Vasari: Le Vite, in 6 volumes, edited by Rosanna Bettarini with extensive commentary by Paola Barocchi (Florence, 1967-87) has recently become the preferred version for some scholars, references will be given for both versions. Hereafter, these editions will be referred to as Vasari-De Vere, Vasari-Milanesi and Vasari-Bettarini-Barocchi respectively. (For the passage quoted in the text see Vasari-Bettarini-Barocchi, VI, 381.)

⁴ St Jerome: Letters and Selected Works, edited by P. Schaff (New York, 1893), pp. 334-46.

⁵ Only one other painting of St Jerome's penitence has come to light in which the artist alludes to the saint's lascivious thoughts: Domenichino's Life of St Jerome cycle (c. 1604), painted in the three lunettes of the portico at the church of Sant' Onofrio in Rome, includes the Temptation of St Jerome, illustrated in Alberto Neppi, Gli affreschi del Domenichino a Roma (Rome, 1958), Pl. IX. This, too, is an unusual interpretation of the subject, depicting three girls dancing in a circle in the middle distance, a motif often associated with sixteenth-century paintings of the Golden Age (see above Chapter II:3, pp. 68-71 and notes 41-42).

⁶ Vasari's St Jerome in Penitence is illustrated in full colour in Laura Conti, Vasari: catalogo completo dei dipinti (Florence: Cantini, 1989), p. 39. On the attributes of St Jerome see George Kaftal, Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting (Florence: Sansoni, 1952), p. 524; Anna Jameson, Sacred and Legendary Art (Boston, 1897), I, 280-281; and the entry 'St Jerome' in The New Catholic Encyclopaedia, VII (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967), 872-874. In the early formation of the imagery of St Jerome in art, the lion was thought to be an appropriate symbol since the lion, known for its fortitude, reflected the *fortezza* of the saint himself. In a later period, when the symbolic meaning of the lion was no longer fully understood, a legend was invented to explain the symbol: it suggested that Jerome had healed a lion's paw.

⁷ For Prudentius's description of Jocus see above Chapter I:2, pp. 20-21.

⁸ The *chaghána* is variously known in western Europe as the "*chapeau (or pavillon) chinois*", "Turkish Crescent" or "Jingling Johnnie". The staff was often further ornamented especially with crescents, bells and sometimes a pair of horizontally mounted cymbals which clashed when the frame was shaken: see H. G. Farmer, Turkish Musical Instruments of the 17th Century (Glasgow, 1937), p. 10; and Brian Chenley, 'Jingling Johnny: a note on the Pavillon Chinois' in Berlioz Society Bulletin, September 1961, pp. 4-5 (cited in 'Turkish Crescent' in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, X, edited by Stanley Sadie (London, 1980), 279). A craze for Janissary-music swept Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries making the *chaghána* a familiar and a more and more extravagantly designed instrument. Its appearance varied, and Farmer notes in The Grove Dictionary of Music, VIII, edited by Eric Blom, (London, 1954), 613 that he had not seen two identical ones. The returning Crusaders introduced various other Turkish instruments into Europe, such as the kettledrums (*zurna*) and the oboe (*hoboys*), but the *chaghána* only appeared in Europe during the sixteenth century (Sadie, 'Janissary Music' in New Grove, VII)

⁹ Turkish artifacts would probably have been familiar in Tuscany during the period of the Renaissance: in the fifteenth century Cosimo de' Medici sent ambassadors to the Ottoman sultan to organise trade links, and Florentine convoys went yearly to Constantinople and Chios. At the turn of the sixteenth century, Florence profited from Venice's difficulties during the Turko-Venetian War (1499-1503), and by 1507 the city had trade links with Turkey amounting to a half-million ducats a year.

¹⁰ On references to the sistrum in the marginal glosses of Prudentius's *Psychomachia* see above Chapter II:2, pp. 58-9.

¹¹ On "*le giuchi di putti*", and the sexual inferences of the theme, see above Chapter III:1.

¹² William Willeford, *The Fool and his Scepter* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), pp. 35-7: the carved head of the *marotte* is an amalgamation of the earlier club with the mirror to which some early jesters addressed their remarks, thereby talking to their own reflections. Vasari had another visual precedent for such a stick as that held by his *Giuoco*: a remarkably similar one had been painted by Michelangelo in the hand of Obed (father of Jesse, grandfather of David), one of the ancestors of Christ painted in the Sistine Chapel lunettes (see Fig. 67). Although the relevance of the image in that context is unclear, it was sure to have been noticed by Vasari when he was working in Rome, particularly when one takes into account his profound admiration of Michelangelo.

¹³ On the description of Jocus in the *Ovide moralisé*, see above Ch. I. 2, pp. 18-20; and Appendix II.

¹⁴ Even after the end of the sixteenth century the formula of fallen weapons to suggest defeat was in common use. It can be evidenced, for example, in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* in his description of '*Amor Domato*': the illustration shows a seated Amor who has his discarded weapons under his feet where they lie broken on the ground (Fig. 68).

¹⁵ The twin sons of Venus in literary sources are discussed above Chapters I:1 and I:2.

¹⁶ *Vasari-Milanesi*, VII, 7 (*Vasari-Bettarini-Barocchi*, V, 511-12; *Vasari-De Vere*, VIII, 162): "*Antonio Vasari suo parente menò Giorgio suo figliol maggiore a fare reverenza al Cardinale [Silvio Passerini, Cardinal of Cortona]; il quale veggendo quel putto, che allora non aveva più di nove anni, . . . essere nelle prime lettere di maniera introdotto, che sapeva a mente una gran parte dell' Eneide di Vergilio, che gliela volle sentire recitare . . . ordinò che . . . gli conducesse quel putto a Fiorenza*"

¹⁷ See note 13 above.

¹⁸ David C. Clark also recognises *Caritas* in this group in his article 'Vasari's 'Temptation of St Jerome' Paintings: Artifacts of his Camaldoli Crisis' in Studies in Iconography, 10 (1984-86), 108; but he takes it as a disguise adopted by Venus in order to seduce men of chastity, a variation of the Venus-as-Diana theme.

¹⁹ 'St Augustine', *Patrologia Latina*, XXXVI, 260-61. A useful source of information on *Caritas* is R. Freyhan, 'The Evolution of the Caritas Figure in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries' in Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XI (1948), 68-86.

²⁰ Cited in Freyhan, 'Caritas', p. 72, note 3.

²¹ St Bernard, 'De Diligendo Deo' in *Patrologia Latina*, CLXXXII, 998 (cited in Freyhan).

²² Freyhan, 'Caritas', p. 73.

²³ The simultaneous existence of both Cupid and Amor in both art and literature had been a puzzle since antiquity that was still the subject of discussion in the sixteenth century (see above Chapter I:2, note 40).

²⁴ On the historic development of Blind Cupid see Panofsky, Studies, pp. 95-128. A personification of Blind Love was unknown in Classical art and appears very rarely in classical literature, although discussions of the blindness of love in the abstract were fairly common. The Platonic belief that love, the most noble of emotions, enters the soul through the eyes, precluded the possibility that Love could be blind, and love poems before the fourteenth century assume that love has sight. However, the moralising mythographies of the late Middle Ages were more pessimistic in their attitude toward love. They considered it to be an experience caused by inconsistency and childishness. Hence a dichotomy developed in the interpretation of love, and it was apparently desirable to differentiate between the personification of pure *amor spiritualis* and sensual *amor carnalis*.

²⁵ Boccaccio, *Genealogia*, IX, 4: "*Oculos autem illi fascia tegunt, ut advertamus amantes ignorare quo tenant, nulla eorum esse iudicia, nullae rerum distinctiones, sed sola passione duci.*" (cited in Panofsky, Studies, p. 107, note 40). Note that Boccaccio uses the term "*fascia*" (bandage) for blindfold.

²⁶ For a more fully developed discussion of the Blind Cupid in Vasari's Penitence see Maureen L. Westmoreland Ille, 'The Chicago Temptation of St

Jerome by Vasari', unpublished M.A. thesis (University of Kentucky, 1984), pp. 48-55.

²⁷ This version of the penitent St Jerome is part of the Charles and Mary Worcester Collection of the Art Institute of Chicago.

²⁸ Hereafter this painting will be referred to as the Temptation.

²⁹ "Weeping" trees, such as willow and birch, are habitually planted in graveyards in southern Germany and Austria. As an artistic topos, they tend to be used in a generalised way (not species specific). I am grateful to Dr Weid of the Kunsthistorische Museum in Vienna for giving me this information. In the moist valleys of southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland there is a species of parasitic moss that hangs from trees: it is known by the figurative term "*flechten*" (garlands) and is possibly related to the similar Spanish Moss of the humid southern states of America which also hangs from the trees like grey and mysterious garlands. In artistic imagery of the upper Rhine, such "weeping" vegetation appears to have often been used to signify death, despair or sin, placed in close proximity to the figure under threat.

³⁰ The full ode by Horace is given in Appendix I. "The monuments of King Numa and the Temple of Vesta" refer to the topography of Rome: Numa built the Regia, official residence of the *Pontifex Maximus*; Vesta was the goddess of the hearth; and it was Ilia, a Vestal Virgin, who was seduced by Mars and hence gave birth to Romulus and Remus, founders of the city of Rome. For her sin Ilia was thrown into the river Tiber where the river god took her as his wife.

³¹ Clark, 'Vasari's Temptation', pp. 105-107: the "spiritual shipwreck" metaphor was a popular one, which was included in the Council of Trent's official definition of penance in 1547. The fig tree, more plausibly, may be intended to represent the biblical "tree of knowledge of good or evil", an allusion to the temptation of Adam and Eve and the consequent Fall of Man.

³² On Vasari's 1538 stay in Rome see *Vasari-Milanesi*, VII, 662 (*Vasari-Betterini-Barocchi* VI, 376-77). Clark, in 'Vasari's Temptation', pp. 97-99, considers that the paintings of St Jerome were patterned on Landino's 'Camaldulensian Dialogues', since during the four summers of 1537 through 1540 Vasari spent time at the monastery of Camaldoli, taking spiritual retreats as well as fulfilling painting commissions. Clark sees Vasari patterning himself on Landino's characters "Alberti" and "Aeneas" during this period, in an artistic and spiritual pilgrimage towards high *Maniera* "as a vehicle for his commitment 'to art alone'." The theory is interesting, but it seems to suggest that Vasari was painting the Penitence for his own, rather than his patron's, purposes. In general, Clark's is a complex esoteric interpretation of the painting; and yet he does not

attempt to either identify or account for Vasari's inclusion of the *putti* who are painted accompanying Venus.

³³ For Vasari's reference to his painting of the Immaculate Conception painted for Bindo Altoviti, see Vasari-Milanesi, VII, 669 (Vasari-Bettarini-Barocchi, VI, 381; Vasari-De Vere, X, 186)

³⁴ Paola Barocchi, Vasari pittore (Milan, 1964), p. 22.

³⁵ Steele Comanger, The Odes of Horace: A Critical Study, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 176.

³⁶ Giorgio Vasari: La Toscana nel '500, exhibition catalogue, edited by Laura Conti et al, exhibited in Arezzo 26 Sept.-29 Nov. 1981 (Florence, 1981), pp. 74-5.

³⁷ K. Langedijk, The Portraits of the Medici, Fifteenth to Eighteenth centuries. (Scelte, 1981), I, 68.

³⁸ Vasari-Milanesi, VII (Vasari-Bettarini-Barocchi, VI). Vasari-Milanesi not only contains the 'Vite', but also the 'Ragionamenti' and two hundred and sixty letters. Il libro delle ricordanze (Arezzo, 1938), I Ragionamenti (Rome, 1938) and Lo zibaldone (Arezzo, 1938) have all been edited by Alessandro del Vita. The Ricordanze records Vasari's paintings as they were completed; the Ragionamenti is a dialogue between Vasari and the Prince of Florence, Don Francesco de' Medici, on the *invenzioni* he had painted for the *Gran Sala* of the *Palazzo Vecchio* (at that time the residence of Duke Cosimo); and the Zibaldone is a compilation of codices in the *archivio vasariano*, an incomplete biographical notebook by Vasari's nephew explaining the *invenzioni* used by Vasari in his paintings.

³⁹ Vasari-Milanesi, VII, 9; (Vasari-Bettarini-Barocchi, V, 513). "... returning to Florence, where they worked with incredible zeal for the space of two years, driven by the desire to learn, they had recourse together with Nannoccio da San Giorgio all three in the workshop of the painter Raffaello da Brescia." (Vasari-De Vere, VIII, 164)

⁴⁰ Vasari is inconsistent in reporting this period of his life: in his autobiography, he omits to mention Raffaello Brescianini's workshop, claiming that he came from Arezzo to Florence in 1528 (rather than 1527) after his father died of the plague; and then saying that he assisted a goldsmith (presumably Manno, with whom he went to Pisa in 1529).

⁴¹ Vasari-Milanesi, VII, 668-69 (Vasari-Bettarini-Barocchi, VI, 380-81).

⁴² *Vasari-Milanesi*, VII, 669 (*Vasari-Betterini-Barocchi*, VI, 381): "*feci a messer Ottaviano de' Medici una Venere ed una Leda, con i cartoni di Michelagnolo.*" The *Ricordanze* records the painting of *Venus and Cupid* for Ottaviano; but the two copies of Michelangelo's *Leda* that Vasari recorded were both, apparently, for Francesco d' Andrea Rucellai: one on June 25th (1541) and the other on August 15th (Del Vita, *Ricordanze*, pp. 35 & 36). Although Vasari states that he made a copy of a nude Venus, a surviving copy of the subject (Fig. 75) shows her clothed in a dress of similar design to that of Venus in his *Penitence*, particularly in the detail of the shoulder-clasp which in both cases has slipped down the arm to reveal the naked shoulder. Pontormo's copy after Michelangelo's cartoon shows the nude version (Fig. 74). Print copies of the *Leda and the Swan* show the eroticism of Michelangelo's original composition (Fig. 73).

⁴³ Millard Meiss, 'Scholarship and Penitence in the Early Renaissance: The Image of St Jerome' in *The Painters Choice* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), p. 190.

⁴⁴ Clark, 'Vasari's *Temptation*', p. 111 and notes 62-65.

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⁴⁵ In both of these paintings, the figure of Venus is treated with the same clear delineation of form which gives her a sculptural quality; and her face has the same kind of precise detail: thin arched eyebrows, a straight nose, and a small mouth. On the evidence of both style and content, it appears that these two paintings are by the same artist or artists.

⁴⁶ Isodoro Ugurgieri, *Le Pompe Sanesi* (1649), II, 347.

⁴⁷ Documents associated with the Brescianini are recorded in Gaetano Milanesi, editor, *Documenti per la storia dell' Arte Senese* (1856), III, 31-33.

⁴⁸ The small amount of known information of the lives of the Brescianini brothers is also given in *Vasari-Milanesi*, VII, 9, note 1, where it is noted that although Raffaello's name does not appear under "R" in the book listing the members of the *Compagnia de' Pittori*, this may be in error, and he, too was probably a member.

⁴⁹ Beccafumi, the most well-known Siennese Mannerist painter, was commissioned to paint an altarpiece for the Church of the Carmine in Siena when the *Baptism of Christ* of the Brescianini was in place in the Duomo. "Giovanni di Bartolomeo" may have been the son of Bartolomeo di Giovanni, identifiable with Berenson's "Alunno di Domenico", a student of Ghirlandaio,

who was commissioned to paint the predella of Ghirlandaio's Adoration in the Foundling Hospital of Florence in 1488.

⁵⁰ Urgurgieri, *Pompe*, p. 348. The painting Madonna and Child with Saints is now in the *Museo dell' opera del Duomo*, whilst The Coronation of the Virgin is on the high altar of the church of SS. *Pietro e Paolo*.

⁵¹ Cecil Gould, Sixteenth Century Italian Schools, National Gallery Catalogues (London, 1975), p. 40. Milanesi's note (*Vasari-Milanesi*, VII, 9) states that Andrea was "*il più noto, ed anche il più valente*" (the most noted, and also the most skillful) of the two brothers, although there seems to be no documentary evidence to support that assertion.

⁵² 'Notable Works of Art Now on the Market' in Burlington Magazine, 100 (December, 1958), Pl. VI, unpaginated section. The description in the advertisement contains inconclusive speculation about the possible artist, and a date of the 1560s is estimated.

⁵³ Albricus, *Allegoria Poetica* (editio princeps Paris, 1520; reprinted London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1976)) IV, ii, folio xl: "*Columbae ei consecrantur quod ille aves sicut et frequens innuit fetant maxime, in coitu fervide creduntur.*" (This twelfth-century book was destined to become the first standard Renaissance handbook of the ancient gods). Cartari, (Venice, 1571) p.533 cites Apuleius: "*E perche ciascun Dio ha animali a se proprij . . . quel di Venere è tirato da candidissime colombe, come dice Apuleio, perche questi uccelli piu di alcun' altro paiono aessere conformi à lei, e sono perciò chiamati anchora a gli uccelli di Venere, imperoche sono oltra modo lascivi, ne è tempo alcuno dell' anno, nel quale non istiano insieme, e dicesi che non monta mai il colombo la colomba, che non la basci prima, come apunto fanno gl'innamorati.*"

⁵⁴ On Blind Cupid see above Chapter IV:1, pp. 128-29 and notes 24-25.

⁵⁵ The reclining nude motif has been investigated by Millard Meiss, 'Sleep in Venice: Ancient Myths and Renaissance Proclivities' in Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society 110 (Oct. 1966), 348-377; and in Seymour Howard, 'The Dresden Venus and its Kin: mutation and retrieval of types' in Art Quarterly (Winter 1979), pp. 90-109.

⁵⁶ Formerly in the collection of the Earl of Crawford in London; then that of Lord Lascelles (c. 1937); they were bought by George R. Hann of Sewickley, Pennsylvania, whose entire art collection was auctioned in the 1980s after his death. The present location is unknown.

⁵⁷ "Otto prints" were produced in a single Florentine workshop. They resemble plate designs as they are usually circular, but in fact they were

probably for the decoration of the covers of round or oval toilet boxes or ladies work boxes. In the case of wooden boxes, they would have been coloured and pasted onto the lids themselves. No extant examples, however, have yet been recorded, but the decoration of wooden boxes in constant use would be unlikely to last very long, which probably accounts for the lack of examples (as does Savonarola's 'burning of the vanities' in 1497 and 98). There are several existing sets of prints of the Life of the Virgin and Christ which are coloured and mounted on panels to serve as altar fronts (see Hind, Early Italian Engraving, I, 85.) The complete set of so-called "Otto prints" was purchased in the eighteenth century by the collector Baron Phillipe de Stosch and was eventually acquired in 1783 by Ernst Peter Otto, a merchant and collector from Leipzig (hence the name "Otto prints"). They are all in the Florentine "fine manner", and it may be that the printmaker was a Northern European settled in Florence as the imagery combines Florentine and Netherlandish elements: classical wreaths and putti coexist with love gardens in which the lovers wear the fashions of Gothic Burgundy. Nevertheless, several of the prints have been attributed to the Italian printmaker Baccio Bandinelli.

⁵⁸ The noun "*fede*", from which "*fe*" derives, can also be used figuratively for a wedding ring.

⁵⁹ Howard, 'Dresden Venus', p. 90.

⁶⁰ For an examination of the evolution of the Hellenistic androgyne into a reclining nude Venus during the Renaissance, see Howard, 'Dresden Venus', pp. 91-104.

⁶¹ Vasari-Milanesi, VI, 277 (Vasari-Bettarini-Barocchi, V, 326; Vasari-De Vere, VII, 172): "*Michelagnolo gli fece un cartone d'una Venere ignuda con un Cupido che la baccia, per farla fare di pittura al Pontormo, e metterla in mezzo a una sua camera, nelle lunette della quale aveva cominciato a fare dipignere dal Bronzino . . . con animo di farvi gli . . . poeti che hanno con versi e prose toscane cantando d'Amore.*"

⁶² Claudian II: Shorter Poems, with translation by Maurice Platnauer, Loeb Classical Library (London, 1922), No. 29, pp. 236-7)

⁶³ L'opera completa del Beccafumi (Milan: Rizzoli, 1977), No. 215.

⁶⁴ For these attributions and dates see Donato Sanminiatielli, Domenico Beccafumi (Milan: Bramante, 1967), p. 84; L'opera completa del Beccafumi (Milan: Rizzoli, 1977), No. 215; Paul Schubring, Cassoni: Truhen und Truhenbilder der italienischen Frührenaissance (Leipzig, 1923), No. 448 (for Della Pacchia).

⁶⁵ The composition seems to derive from classical images of the reclining Hermaphrodite, in which the *amoretto* on Hermaphrodite's hip invariably holds a heart-shaped fan (Fig. 82 [a] and [b] show copies of this motif. The various objects held by each of the playing *putti* in the Sienese panel paintings seem to replace this fan. Howard ('Dresden Venus', p. 101) cites a copy of an antique gem with this Hermaphrodite motif that was in the Medici collection in the fifteenth century.

⁶⁶ This painting is also referred to as "Reclining Nymph" in some publications, since the figure has no attributes to identify her as Venus, not even Cupid.

⁶⁷ The similarity between the wheel playing in the *Caritas* tondo and that in the anonymous *Venus and Cupids in a Landscape* probably accounts for the latter having at one time been attributed to Beccafumi. An estimated date for Beccafumi's tondo is 1525, based on its similarity in style to his *Nativity* in San Martino of that date. An attempt to date his *Reclining Venus* by a stylistic correlation with the fresco decorations of the *Palazzo gia Bindi Sergardi* (which depict the same kind of shot fabric and exposed breast on a number of reclining nudes) is inconclusive, since the frescoes, too, are undocumented and their chronology equally uncertain.

⁶⁸ On the sexual implications of the phrase "*ludus puerorum*" see above Part III:1

⁶⁹ Paola della Pergola lists all publications in which this painting is mentioned from 1650 up to 1959 in *Galleria Borghese* (1959), II, 19-20.

⁷⁰ E. Platner et al., *Beschreibung der Stadt Rom* (Stuttgart-Tübingen, 1842), III, i, 292; A. Venturi, *Il Museo e la Galleria Borghese* (Rome, 1873), p. 160; H. Voss, *Die Malerie der Spätrenaissance in Rom und Florenz* (Berlin, 1920), I, 160, note 1.

⁷¹ G. Frizzoni, 'Three Little-Noticed Paintings in Rome' in *Burlington Magazine*, XX (1912), 267.

⁷² It is interesting to read Cartari's amplified explanation of the sea-shell as an attribute of Venus (Cartari, *Imagini* (1571), p. 531): "*e la conca marina mostra sempre che sia Venere nata del mare, . . . che perche la conca marina nel coito tutta s' apre, e tutta si mostra, sia data à Venere, per dimostrare quello, che ne i Venerei congiungimenti si fa, e ne i piaceri amorosi.*" (and the sea-shell always shows that Venus was born from the sea, ... because the sea-shell in coitus opens itself completely, and shows itself completely, so it is given to Venus to demonstrate that Venus makes intercourse and the pleasure of love.) This explanation, however, derives from earlier influential sources. It appears in

Albricus's twelfth-century *Allegoria Poetica* (IV, ii, folio xl) in which he cites Porphyry; and also in Boccaccio's fourteenth-century *Genealogia Deorum* (see *Genealogia de gli dei de gentili* [Venice, 1574] folio 55 verso). In each case Venus is described as holding the shell in her hand, just as the Brescianini have depicted her.

⁷³ For example, 'The Works of Marcantonio Raimondi and His School' in *The Illustrated Bartsch*, 27 (14), edited by Konrad Oberhuber (New York, 1978), pp. 78-84.

⁷⁴ London, British Library, Yates-Thompson Codex, folio 142 recto. The 'Yates-Thompson Codex' is so called because it was acquired by the British Museum under the terms of the will of Mrs Henry Yates-Thompson in 1941. It had been purchased for the Yates-Thompson library from Señor Luis Mayens of Madrid in 1901.

⁷⁵ Singleton, *Dante's Paradiso* I, 82-3.

⁷⁶ Pope-Hennessy, *A Sienese Codex*, pp. 20-31.

⁷⁷ Pope-Hennessy, *A Sienese Codex*, p. 28. L. Rocca, in *Di alcuni commenti della Divina Commedia* (Florence, 1891), notes that Vasari, in his 'Life of Cimabue' (*Vasari-Milanesi*, I, 256) cites "un commentatore di Dante, il quale scrisse nel tempo che Giotto vivea e dieci o dodici anni dopo la morte d'esso Dante, cioè intorno agli anni di Christo 1334" then "Il qual commento e oggi appresso il molto reverendo Don Vincenzio Borghini, priore degl' Innocenti." A footnote by Milanesi states that this anonymous commentary is, in fact, the 'Ottimo commento' (first published in Pisa by Torri [1827-30]). A copy of the 'Ottimo commento' was therefore in the possession of Vasari's friend Vincenzo Borghini in Florence and Vasari had apparently read it.

⁷⁸ On the 'Ottimo commento' and its interpretation of this part of to Dante's 'Paradiso' see above Chapter I:2, pp. 26-7 and notes 56-58).

⁷⁹ Notes on lines 1-12 of 'Il paradiso' in various editions of Dante's *Divine Comedy* consistently indicate the erotic interpretation of the word "folle": eg. "amore carnale" in *La divina commedia: Paradiso*, edited by Aldo Vallone and Luigi Scorrano (Naples, 1987), p. 142, note 2; "sensuale" in 'Il paradiso', V, iii, *La divina commedia* (Milan, Ulrico Hoepli, 1938).

⁸⁰ On Cupid and Jocus in the *Ovide moralisé*, see above Chapter I:2, pp. 23-25 and Appendix II.

⁸¹ *A Renaissance Entertainment: Festivities for the Marriage of Cosimo I. Duke of Florence in 1539*, translated with commentary by A. C. Minor and B.

Mitchell (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1968); this is a translation of '*Apparato et festee . . .*' copied from a letter of M. Pierfrancesco Giambullari to M. Giovanni Bandini.

⁸² The association of the Latin "*iocus*" with sexual exploits has been discussed above (Ch. I:1 and I:3). The *Vocabolario Universale della Lingua Italiana*, IV (Mantua, 1849) explains that: "*giuoco d'amore = l'atto venereo. Lat: coitis.*"; and the *Grande dizionario* VI, 798 (14) explains "*giuoco*" as "*Rapporto amoroso; congiunzione carnale, atto erotico*" citing various literary sources that use "*giuoco*" with this specific meaning.

⁸³ The early history of the 'Yates-Thompson Codex' is fully discussed by Pope-Hennessy, *A Sienese Codex*, pp. 7-10.

⁸⁴ A partially erased inscription below the arms on the first folio of the codex states: "*Es de la Libreria de S.Miguel de los Reyes*". It is usually deduced that the codex was transported there by Fernando, Duke of Calabria who founded the convent as a royal burial place in 1538, after the fall of the Aragonese in Naples. On this inscription see Pope-Hennessy, *A Sienese Codex*, pp. 8-9 and note 18.

⁸⁵ Vaticano latino 7134, cited in Tammara de Marinis, 'Inventory B: "*Index regalium codicum Alfonsi regis: Ad Laurentium medicem, ex Neapolitana eius biblioteca transmissus; hoc ordine.*" ' in *La biblioteca napoletana dei re Aragona*, (Milan, 1947-52), II, 193-200.

⁸⁶ The strongest evidence for a date in the early 1520s for the Brescianino painting is that Andrea del Brescianino is assumed to have died in 1525; but that evidence has already been shown to be speculative and inconclusive; and his brother, with whom he is known to have painted conjointly, lived for a further twenty years. No doubt Raffaello continued to paint in the same style, even if his brother had died.

⁸⁷ Manilli, *Villa Borghese fuori Porta Pinciana* (1650), p. 68.

⁸⁸ Pierre Hurtubise, *Un famille-temoin les Salviati, Studi e Testi* No.309, (Vatican City, Rome: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1985), pp. 250, 408 and 489.

⁸⁹ Hurtubise, *Salviati*, p. 241. On the inter-relationships between Salviati family members, especially Cardinal Antonio Maria and his uncle Cardinal Giovanni, see Hurtubise, Chapter 8, pp. 233-66.

⁹⁰ *Vasari-Milanesi*, VII, 9 (*Vasari-Betterini-Barocchi*, V, 513)

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⁹¹ *Vasari-Milanesi*, VII, 604 (*Vasari-Bettarini-Barocchi*, VI, 237): Vasari claims to have been Bronzino's friend since 1524, when, as a youth, he went to draw at the Certosa, where Bronzino was assisting Pontormo.

⁹² *Vasari-Milanesi*, VII, 598-99 (*Vasari-Bettarini-Barocchi*, VI, 234). The painting described by Vasari is a panel painting 146 x 116 centimeters, hereafter referred to as the Allegory. It is also known as The Exposure of Luxury. During cleaning in 1958, later additions were removed, such as a spray of leaves covering Cupid's buttocks, and some drapery. (Cecil Gould, The Sixteenth Century Italian Schools, National Gallery Catalogues (London, 1975), p. 42.

⁹³ The following represent some of the major interpretations of Bronzino's Allegory by modern scholars: Erwin Panofsky, Studies in Iconology (New York, 1962), pp. 86-91; Michael Levey 'Sacred and Profane Significance in Two Paintings by Bronzino' in Studies in Renaissance and Baroque Art (London, 1967), pp. 30-33; Walter Keach, 'Cupid Disarmed or Venus Wounded? An Ovidian Source for Michelangelo and Bronzino', in Journal of the Courtauld and Warburg Institutes, XLI (1978), 327-331; Graham Smith, 'Jealousy, Pleasure and Pain in Agnolo Bronzino's Allegory of Venus and Cupid', in Pantheon, XXXIX (1981), 250-258; Charles Hope, 'Bronzino's Allegory in the National Gallery', in Journal of the Warburg and Courtaulds Institutes, XLV (1982), 239-243; J. F. Conway, 'Syphilis and Bronzino's London Allegory', in Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XLIX (1986), 250-255; John F. Moffitt 'A Hidden Sphinx by Agnolo Bronzino, 'ex tabula Cebetis Thebani'', Renaissance Quarterly, XLVI (1993), 277-307.

⁹⁴ The identification of the female figure as "Oblivion" was offered by Hope and accepted by Conway. Other interpretations are: "Truth" (Panofsky's original interpretation); "Night" (Panofsky); and "Fraud" (Levey). The male figure at top right is identified as "Time" by all writers, but is not mentioned at all in Vasari's description.

⁹⁵ Enea Vico was a printmaker from Parma, trained in Rome and active between 1541 and 1560. The design of this print of *Dolor* is attributed to Salviati in The Illustrated Barch, XXX, edited by John Spike (New York, 1985), No. 63. The inscription is also appropriate, suggesting that sorrow results from unreasonable or wanton unsettling of the mind. In Bronzino's painting, the figure behind Cupid has been identified as "Jealousy" (by Vasari, Panofsky, Levey, Gould and Hope); and as "Envy" (by Smith). The most unusual interpretation is Conway's imaginative theory that it represents "Syphilis".

⁹⁶ There is a precedent for a figure such as this one having a related, deceitful role. Graham Smith likens the figure to Alciati's and Cartari's descriptions of the "*Lamia*", a monster whose top half is that of a beautiful and seductive woman whilst the bottom half is covered in scales and ends in a poisonous, snake-like tail. Cartari's description of the *Lamia* post-dates Bronzino's painting, but Alciati's predates it. The figure in the painting is also thought to be "Fraud" (Panofsky), "Pleasure" (Levey), "*Calumnial/Bugia*" (Hope) or, most recently, the "Sphinx" (Moffitt).

⁹⁷ Alciati: *Index Emblematicus*, edited by Peter M. Daly (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), I, No. 112

⁹⁸ *Vasari-Milanesi*, VII, 598-99 (*Vasari-Bettarini-Barocchi*, VI, 234). Translated in *Vasari-De Vere*, X, 7.

⁹⁹ Vasari's descriptions often seem unreliable; even details in his description of his own *St Jerome in Penitence*, discussed above (see Ch. IV. 1, p. 124) is not accurate, although one would have expected that he would have known every detail of that painting since he copied it himself at least twice (see above p. 64 and note 108). On Vasari and his descriptions of paintings see Svetlana Alpers 'Ekphrasis and Aesthetic Attitudes in Vasari's *Lives*', in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XXIII (1960), 190-215.

¹⁰⁰ Panofsky first suggested such an alternative reading (see *Studies*, p. 87); and it is further developed by Moffitt, who suggests an implied verb, "*significa*" between "*ed*" and "*il Piacere*" (Moffitt, 'A Hidden Sphinx', p. 277, note 3).

¹⁰¹ Panofsky, *Studies*, p. 88, note 72.

¹⁰² Descriptions of this painting usually refer to the "doves" of Venus, yet there is only one, in the bottom left-hand corner. Usually Venus is identified by a pair of doves together: Cartari cites Apuleius saying that doves are called the birds of Venus because they are exceedingly lascivious and that there is no time of the year when they are not together (Cartari (1571), 531). Possibly the painting has at some time been cut down, thus cropping off one of the birds.

¹⁰³ For Prudentius's description of Jocus, see above Chapter I:2, pp. 20-21.

¹⁰⁴ On the Master of the Die's print *Frieze with Child Riding a Goat*, see above Chapter III:1, pp. 81-2.

¹⁰⁵ Bronzino's *Allegory of Happiness* is illustrated in full colour in Charles McCorquedale, *Bronzino* (London, 1981), p. 149. Graham Smith

discusses the iconography of the painting in 'Bronzino's Allegory of Happiness' in Art Bulletin, LXVI, no. 3 (September 1984), 390-399. The figure of Folly has been painted at the feet of his traditional antagonist, Prudence, who is painted *bifrons* (see above chapter III:3); he is also shown crushed under the weight of an aged male figure identified as Eternity.

¹⁰⁶ Because of the association of an anklet of bells with jesters, Levey was led to interpret the *putto* as Folly, an interpretation which, for a long time, was part of the title by which the painting was known, Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time.

¹⁰⁷ Cartari, Imagini, 1571, p. 536: "*Alla quale furono date le rose parimente, perche queste hanno soave odore, che rappresenta la soavita de i piaceri amorosi: overo perche come le rose sono coloriste, e malagevolmente si possono cogliere senza sentire le punture delle acute spine, cosi pare che la libidine seco porti il farci arrossire ogni volta che della bruttezza di quella ci ricordiamo; onde la coscienza de i già commessi errori ci pugne, e ci traffige in modo, che ne settiamo gravissimo dolore.*"

¹⁰⁸ Boccaccio, Genealogia (1548), III, 55 verso "*Ma noi passiamo all' avanzo danno a lei in sua guardia le rose, percioche rosseggiano, et pungono. Ilche pare essere cosa propria di libidine. Conciosia che per bruttezza della scelerità vengiamo rossi, e per la coscienza del peccato siamo da un stimolo punti. Et cosi, si come per un certo spatio la rosa si diletta, ed in breve si marcisce, la libidine ancho è una breve gioia, e una cagione di lunga penenza attento che breve cade quello che diletta, e quello che da noia si prolunga.*"

¹⁰⁹ Vasari's description also mentioned "*il Piacere*". Erwin Panofsky thought that both "*il Giuoco*" and "*il Piacere*" equally suited the nude *putto*. Charles Hope, on the other hand, prefers to identify the *putto* by his flowers and hence decides that he is "*il Piacere*", thereby dispensing with the figure of "*il Giuoco*" completely.

¹¹⁰ Prudentius, Psychomachia, 326.

¹¹¹ In Petrus Berchorius's Moralised Ovid in Latin (a widely-read mythological authority even two-hundred years after his book was written in 1340), Cupid kissing Venus was explained as a sign of particularly potent lustful appetite which had "wounding" effects: "*Cupidino matrem osculans significat consanguineos, qui nimis familiariter consanguineos [consanguineas] osculantur, sic quod inde per appetitum luxurie ipse consanguinee vulnera[n]tur.*" This source is cited in Panofsky, Studies, p. 88, note 72.

¹¹² The problem of secure identification of this personification seems to lie in attempting to translate the Italian "*il Giuoco*" too literally as Jest or Folly

or Play, thereby losing the implied figurative meaning of sexual intercourse when *giuoco* is used in connection with *amor*. The "*giuoco d'amore*" encompasses simultaneously the qualities of play, pleasure and folly; and perhaps the most appropriate translation in present-day English is Sport, a term which may also carry a certain amount of sexual innuendo.

¹¹³ Borghini's original plan of the programme for the celebrations of the wedding is recorded in manuscript known as his '*Libretto*' (Florence: Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magl. II, X, 100, Provenienza Rinuccini). The manuscript is described, and Borghini's *invenzione* analysed in Richard A. Scorza, 'Vincenzo Borghini and Invenzione: The Florentine Apparato of 1565' in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XLIV (1981), 57-75. Borghini's '*Libretto*' has been partially published by P. Ginori Conti, as *L'apparato per le nozze di Francesco de' Medici e di Giovanna d' Austria* (Florence, 1936).

¹¹⁴ *Vasari-Milanesi*, VII, 604; (*Vasari-Betterini-Barocchi*, VI, 237; translated, *Vasari-De Vere*, X, 11).

¹¹⁵ Ticozzi-Bottari, *Lettere* I, lxii, 216-217.

¹¹⁶ The presence of identifying attributes is attested to in a description of the festive preparations, attributed to Giambattista Cini and included in Vasari's *Vite* (*Vasari-Milanesi*, VIII; *Vasari-Bettarini-Barocchi*, VI, 268-9).

¹¹⁷ The *apparati* are described and illustrated by Ioannes Bochiuss, *Historica Narratio Profectionis et Inaugurationis Serenissimorum Belgi Principum Alberti et Isabellae, Austriae Archiducum* (Antwerp and Brussels, 1602), pp.207-208. (I am grateful to Dr Elizabeth McGrath of the Warburg Institute for bringing this source to my attention.) The Antwerp display is, overall, much more decorous than the 1565 Florentine one. The whole composition, with dolphins carrying the seashell to the shore, and Mercury with the Three Graces nearby, derives from classical literary references. Visually, Isabella and the Graces (like three ladies-in-waiting) are dressed contemporaneously, lending them a certain austere dignity. In contrast, Cupid, Jocus, Mercury and several decorative *erotes* around the stage setting are all classicising.

¹¹⁸ "*Lusus, laeta Quies cernitur et Decor; / Quos circum volitat turba Cupidinem / Et plaudens recinet haec Hymeneus ad / Regalis thalami fores. / Quid statis juvenes tam genialibus / Indulgere toris immemores? Joci / Cessant et choreae; ludere vos simul / Poscunt tempora mollius.*" Here, Jocus is associated with marriage jokes.

¹¹⁹ Ticozzi-Bottari, *Lettere*, I, lvi, 153.

¹²⁰ Ginori Conti, *L'apparato*, Appendix V, pp. 124-25. These sources have been analysed by Scorza in his unpublished M.Phil. thesis 'Vincenzo Borghini (1515-1580) and Medici Artistic Patronage' (London, Warburg Institute, 1981), pp. 36-48.

¹²¹ Seznec, *Pagan Gods*, pp. 280-83.

¹²² Scorza, 'Vincenzo Borghini and *Invenzione*', p. 58 and note 13; and p. 72, note 117.

¹²³ Scorza, 'Vincenzo Borghini and Medici Patronage', chapter V.

¹²⁴ Scorza, 'Vincenzo Borghini and Medici Patronage', p. 76.

¹²⁵ Borghini's role as an iconographic advisor, including his contact with Vasari, is fully explored in Richard Scorza's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 'Vincenzo Borghini (1515-1580) as Iconographic Advisor' (London, Warburg Institute, 1987)

¹²⁶ *Der literarische Nachlass Giorgio Vasari*, I, cxxi, edited by K. Frey (Munich, 1923), p. 243. The earliest surviving letters exchanged by Vasari and Borghini date from 1549.

¹²⁷ Cited in Piero Calamandrei, *Scritti e inediti celliniani*, (Florence, 1971), p. 116. Calamandrei cites several instances in Cellini's writing where he comments on the closeness of Vasari and Borghini.

NOTES PART FIVE

Chapter V:1

¹ H. W. Westropp and C. S. Wake, Ancient Symbol Worship: Influence of the Phallic Idea on the Religions of Antiquity (1874), p. 28. According to Aristotle, Greek comedy rose out of the *phallika* of Dionysiac ritual (Poetics, iv, 12).

² The Fool's place in carnival plays is discussed in Maximilian J. Rudwin, The Origin of German Carnival Comedy (Leipzig, 1920), p. 9-10; Alan Brody, The English Mummers and their Plays: Traces of Ancient Mystery (London, 1970); and Heinrich Adelbert von Keller, Fastnachtspiele aus dem funfzehnten Jahrhundert (Stuttgart, 1853), I, 121-127. The Fool in a Love Garden is examined in Keith Moxey's article "Master E.S. and the Folly of Love" in Simiolus 11, (1980) pp. 125-148.

³ The demise of the Fool in art is evidenced in The German Single-leaf Woodcut: volume II, edited by Max Geisberg (New York, 1975), containing prints from 1500-1550, has numerous examples of Fools; but none can be found in volume III, edited by W. L. Strauss (New York, 1977), which contains prints from 1550-1600.

⁴ On the Old Testament fool see Stephen Mandry, There Is No God! -- A Study of the Fool in the Old Testament (Rome, 1972), p. 51.

⁵ The literature of folly is clearly presented by Barbara Swain in Fools and Folly During the Middle Ages and Renaissance (Folcroft, Pa., 1976).

⁶ Swain, Fools and Folly, p. 10.

⁷ The rise and spread of humanism is usefully surveyed in A. G. Dickens, The Age of Humanism and Reformation (London: Prentiss-Hall International Inc., 1977).

⁸ Dickens, Humanism and Reformation, p. 6.

⁹ The development of the *devotio moderna* and its influence of Erasmus is discussed in Albert Hyma, The Youth of Erasmus, History & Political Science Series X, (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1930), chapter 3, pp. 21-35. Interestingly, contrary to the opinion expressed by Hyma (p. 30), the New Catholic Encyclopaedia II, 831) describes the *devotio moderna* as antihumanistic, having "no use for purely human values." Hyma's other studies of the *devotio moderna* include 'The Influence of the *Devotio Moderna*'

in Nederlandsch Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis (1926) pp. 275-78; and The Christian Renaissance: a History of the Devotio Moderna (New York, 1925).

¹⁰ Robert Klein, La forme et l'intelligible, *Bibliothèque des Sciences Humaines* (Paris, 1970), pp. 445-446.

¹¹ On the relationship of the Praise of Folly to carnival tradition, see Donald Gwynn Watson, 'Erasmus's "Praise of Folly" and the Spirit of Carnival' in Renaissance Quarterly, XXXII (1979), 333-353.

¹² Thomas à Kempis, The Imitation of Christ (London, 1903), p. 27

¹³ William Kaiser, Praisers of Folly (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 9.

¹⁴ Kempis, Imitation of Christ, p. 23.

¹⁵ Jasper Hopkins, translator, Nicholas of Cusa On Learned Ignorance (Minneapolis: Arthur Banning Press, 1981), p. 9.

¹⁶ Hopkins, Nicholas of Cusa, (I, iii, 10), p. 53.

¹⁷ Erasmus of Rotterdam, 'Praise of Folly' (65), in Erasmus: Praise of Folly and Letter to Martin Dorp translated by Betty Radice, with notes by A. H. T. Levi (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 196.

¹⁸ On Erasmus's development as a Christian humanist see Levi's introduction in Radice-Levi, Erasmus, pp. 7-50.

¹⁹ Erasmus, 65 (Radice-Levi, Erasmus, p. 197)

²⁰ Erasmus's interpretation of *parvuli* as *stulti* is fully demonstrated by M. A. Screech in Ecstasy and the Praise of Folly (London, 1980), pp. 30-33.

²¹ Lucubrationes, 63 E (cited by Screech). The Lucubrationes was first published as a collection of "*spiritualia*" in 1503.

²² Screech, Ecstasy, p. 33.

²³ G. Martin and M. Cinotti, The Complete Paintings of Bosch (New York & London, 1966), p. 94; Jheronimus Bosch, exhibition catalogue ('sHertogenbosch, 1967), p. 106; Charles de Tolnay, Hieronymus Bosch (Baden-Baden, 1967), p. 27.

²⁴ Dirk Bax, Bosch (The Hague, 1946), pp. 110-11 and 127.

²⁵ James Pierce, 'Memling's Mills' in Studies in Medieval Culture, II (1966), 111-19. Walter Gibson has examined all of these possibilities in 'Bosch's Boy with a Whirligig: some Iconographic Speculations' in Simiolus, 8 (1975-76), 9-15

²⁶ The court jester type of personification of folly appears in The Conjurer; in the 'Luxuria' panel of The Seven Deadly Sins; and in The Ship of Fools.

²⁷ Bosch's religious triptychs, such as The Haywain and The Garden of Earthly Delights, usually have a central panel depicting earthly weaknesses, set between Paradise and Hell panels, suggesting that he intended to convey universal earthly folly as a condition that imprisons mankind, impeding progress toward Paradise, and leading towards a Hell in which one will be punished according to ones sins. This closely accords with the principles expounded in the Imitation of Christ by Thomas à Kempis: "O how great is human frailty, always prone to evil." (I, 22). Like Kempis, Bosch urges meditation on ones weaknesses: "The most perfect victory is to triumph over ourselves" (Kempis, III, 53). The correspondence which can be found between Bosch's mature paintings and Kempis's words strongly supports the theory that Bosch was, in his own very personal way, influenced by the *devotio moderna*.

²⁸ The full set of Dürer's illustrations for the Life of the Virgin, including those with playing *putti* holding windmills, can be found in The Complete Woodcuts of Albrecht Dürer, edited by Willi Kurth (New York, 1946), Pl. 175-91.

²⁹ Illustrated in J. B. Knipping & M. Gerrits, Het kind in neerlandse beeldende kunst (Wageningen, n.d.), I, 43, fig. 17

³⁰ Illustrated in M. J. Friedlander, Early Netherlandish Painting (Brussels, 1972), Pl. 22.

³¹ Illustrated in Gibson, Boy with a Whirligig, p. 11.

³² New Catholic Encyclopaedia, II, 831, col.i.

Chapter V:2

³³ For a comprehensive study of the *oeuvre* of the *kleinmeesteren*, see the catalogue of the exhibition The World in Miniature: engraving by the German Little Masters, Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas (Lawrence, Kansas, 1988).

³⁴ On *ludus puerorum* see above chapter III: 1. Note also that Johan Huizinga (in *Homo Ludens*, (London, 1949) p. 43) points out the association of play and sex in several languages, including German: for example, a bastard child is called "*Spielkind*" and copulation is "*Minnespiel*". Even in Sanskrit copulation is "*krīḍaratnam*", (the jewel of games). Huizinga notes that the term "play" is most often used when erotic relations take place outside the social norm, referring to illicit intercourse. A study by Hendrik Aertsen includes an analysis of the repeated use of the word "play" to indicate sexual activity in the English language, with numerous examples Middle English literature: Play in Middle English: a Contribution to Word Field Theory (Amsterdam, 1987).

³⁵ The painting is now catalogued as *Lebensalter der Frau* in accordance with the most recent monograph of the artist, *Hans Baldung Grien: Gemälde und dokumente* by Gert von der Osten (Berlin, 1983), pp. 58-61, in which the author contends that it represents three stages in the cycle of womanhood, accompanied by Death (entitling it "*Die drei Lebensalter und der Tod*"). He sees the infant as a girl child, but I question this interpretation. Not only is there a hint of male genitalia seen through the veil that covers the figure, but the hobbyhorse painted as the child's attribute was traditionally a boy's rather than a girl's toy.

³⁶ The panel appears to be cropped at the left-hand side, thus placing the young woman and her companions peculiarly off-centre.

³⁷ Charles Cutler, in *Northern Painting from Pucelle to Bruegel* (New York, 1968) pp. 388-89, believes the veiled *putto* reiterates the medieval concept of veiled Cupid as a symbol of lust. This interpretation highlights the assumption, so often made, that a naked *putto* necessarily represents Cupid, despite the lack of bow, quiver or arrows, the ubiquitous attributes of the god of love. In this case, Cutler does not attempt to account for the dropped hobbyhorse. Nevertheless, the proximity of a naked young woman to a *putto* is inevitably reminiscent of Venus and Cupid.

³⁸ Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts ca. 1450-1700*, X (1954) 191.

³⁹ The engraving is dated by Adam Bartch as late 15th century, and entitled "*Virginius tuant sa propre fille*" (*Peintres-graveur* (Leipzig, 1854-76), XIII, 108).

⁴⁰ Boccaccio, *I casi de gli huomini illustri* (Venice, 1545), IV, 72; Livy, 'Ab Urbe Condita' (iii), in *Livy II*, 44-58 with translation by B. O. Foster, Loeb Classical Library (London, 1922)

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